

**Dr. Kathryn Jacobs**

**Fall 2015**

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**English 471.001**

**Early British Literature**

## **Syllabus**

Week 1:

### **A few words on Old English:**

Caedmon's Hymn; The Wife's Lament  
Marie De France Lanval and Bisclavret

Week 2:

### **English:**

### **An Introduction to Chaucer's Middle**

Scribe Adam

Chaucer's Complaint to His Purse, To His  
Chaucer's *General Prologue*

Week 3:

*Miller's Introduction and Tale*  
*Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*

Week 4:

*Merchant's Prologue and Tale*

Week 5:

*Franklin's Prologue and Tale*  
*Nun's Priest's Tale*

### **EXAM #1: Weeks 1-5.**

Week 6:

*Beowulf*

Week 7:

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Week 8:

*Hunt*],

**Petrarchan Love Poems:** Wyatt: *They flee from me, Forget not yet, [Whoso List to Farewell Love, Whoso Who List;*

**Marlowe:** "Passionate Shepherd";

**Raleigh:** "Nymph's Reply," "The Lie,"

**Donne:** The Bait

**Marvell:** "To His Coy Mistress

**Drayton:** *Idea #61*

Week 9: **Marlowe:**  
*Hero and Leander,*  
*Dr Faustus* (focus especially on 1-5, 12-13).

Week 10: **Metaphysical Poems:**  
**Donne:** Sun Rising, [The Indifferent],  
Canonization, The Flea, Elegy 19 To His  
Mistress, Holy Sonnet #10, 14  
**Herbert:** The Alter, Easter Wings, Jordan 1,  
the Collar  
**Drayton:** Sonnet 61.

**EXAM #2: From Middle English to Early  
Modern**

Week 11:  
**midnight.** **Research Proposal Due Monday,**

**Cavalier Poets: Jonson** On My First Son, To  
The Memory of Mr. William Shakespeare  
**Herrick:** To the Virgins, To Make Much of  
Time, Delight in Disorder  
**Marvell:** To His Coy Mistress

**And The Counter-Movement: Milton:**  
Sonnet 19,  
Paradise Lost book I, 1-375.

Week 12: **Milton:** Finish book 1: 375-798.  
Book 2: 1-485 (the Epic Counsel)  
Book 4: 1-130 (Satan's soliloquy only)  
Book IX: 1-494 (The Fall Part 1: the Set-up)

Week 13: **Bibliography Due Monday, midnight**

**Milton:** Finish book IX (The Fall Part 2)  
Book X: 1-228 (The Judgment)  
Book X: 720-1104 (First Fight and  
Reconciliation)  
Book XII: 624-649 (The End)

Week 14: **Congreve:** The Way of the World

Week 15:

**Research Paper Due Monday, Midnight.**

Death of

**Swift:** A Description of a City Shower, The  
Lady's Dressing Room, Verses on the  
Dr. Swift, A Modest Proposal.

**Pope:** Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot

**EXAM #3: Early Modern and After**

## Course Description

**Texts: The Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 1: The Medieval Period 2<sup>nd</sup> edition** (*mandatory*)

**\*The Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 2: The Renaissance and the Early Seventeenth Century Second** (*optional; see below*).

**\*Congreve The Way of the World:** available free digitally from amazon (kindle edition), or download (free) from the Gutenberg Project.

**\*Dryden and Swift** poems are available for free from the Gutenberg Project or (if you prefer) simply put the title and author into google; these texts are widely available.

### Texts Explained:

The Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 1: The Medieval Period is **required**. Yes, medieval authors are available free from the Gutenberg Project, **but the notes are not, and you will need them**. Middle English is difficult; I have never met an undergraduate who does not need notes. In fact, pretty much anyone who is not a medievalist needs notes. In addition, the Old English is translated, and translations differ widely from one edition to the next; you would be under a significant disadvantage if you used another translation.

**Warning:** there is a "concise" 1 volume edition of the Broadview anthology available that includes the medieval period, the Renaissance, and the eighteenth century in one convenient volume. **Do not buy it!** This edition leaves out at least half of the Chaucer I have assigned, and several other assigned texts. The Norton anthology likewise leaves out some of my favorite tales (The Franklin's Tale for instance), and the same is true of the Longman Anthology. In short, for this course The Broadview Medieval Period **is a must**.

On the other hand, the Renaissance, seventeenth and eighteenth century texts are all available from the Gutenberg Project. And because of this, they are widely disseminated online. Those of you who want:

1. the convenience of a text that collects almost all the assignments in one place, or
2. if you are unfamiliar with Shakespearean English

should buy *The Renaissance and Seventeenth Century* volume as well. The rest of you however should at least consider downloading all the assignments taken from this volume from the Gutenberg Project or (where available) from other reliable sources. Many are in wide circulation; all are included in the Gutenberg Project. And you can definitely save money this way.

If you select this option however, please bear two things in mind:

1. These texts have no notes to help you, and
2. **You** are responsible for finding and downloading all texts in a timely manner.

To amplify: these are well known authors; they are not hard to find. If however you feel a need to write me weekly for reassurance, *you need to buy the Broadview instead*. Once in a great while (i.e. when reading Wyatt "They Flee From Me") you may find two similar but not identical versions of the same poem available. In a case like this, please read them both; the poem is short, and if you aren't reading all the poems at least twice you're skimping on prep anyway.

**Re Swift and Pope:** for this one assignment, please read the texts online, or from whatever anthology you happen to own. You may of course buy the Broadview Eighteenth Century volume. But since this is the only assignment from that text, that hardly seems necessary.

**Final Advice: USE A DICTIONARY. This is essential if you don't buy the Broadview text,** and it is not an insult; I use dictionaries constantly, and my vocabulary is just fine. Let me recommend the **Oxford English Dictionary** for this purpose (available for free online through this university's library page). This dictionary not only defines words, it will tell you which meanings were current in which centuries. Many words still in use today (i.e. the word "use") have quite surprising meanings in the Renaissance. To "use" could also mean to have sexual intercourse for instance; this is a common secondary meaning. Ditto the word "kindly" in Wyatt has the primary meaning of "by nature, naturally." The West Side Story line "stick to your own kind" is a leftover of this usage. Scan the dates beneath each meaning to find out when this usage began, and when it ended. Some of you are probably in the habit of using sites on line designed to help students. I will not recommend particular sites, since none are reliable. But it is not cheating to use them, as long as you do so after reading the text assigned. Do not forget however to assess whatever you read **critically**. And remember: sites designed for students are not peer-reviewed, and thus do not qualify as bibliographical references.

### **Course Objectives:**

This is a survey course beginning with the earliest recorded British literature, and going all the way to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Because of the breadth of this course, and because the earliest literature was written in Old English or (in the case of Marie de France) Old French, the earliest literature will be read in translation. Here then the course will focus on the genre expectations of the period, and its historical and cultural assumptions. In the process we will also focus on literary analysis (theme, metaphor, etc).

Beginning in the 14<sup>th</sup> century however, the literature of this course (notably, Chaucer and the Gawain Poet) will be written in Middle English – and while the

Middle English will be glossed, it will not be translated. Here then the focus of the class will shift (initially, at least) to reading comprehension, supplemented by lectures to explicate genre and cultural assumptions.

Finally, as the literature enters Early Modern English, the focus of the class will shift again: this time to the relationship of literary form and content.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to master the literary diction necessary to comprehend pre-modern literary texts.
2. Students will be able to analyze the cultural assumptions inherent in pre-modern literary texts – assumptions no longer current today.
3. Students will be able to produce a literary research paper with a focused argument, a comprehensive review of the relevant scholarship, and conclusions based on close literary analysis of the text.

### **Grading Criteria:**

<b>Class Discussion:</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Exam #1:</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Exam #2:</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Exam #3:</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Annotated Bibliography:</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Research Paper:</b>	<b>20%</b>

### **Grading Criteria, Explicated:**

**Class Discussion:** Discussions will be held roughly once every **other** week. This is an experiment on my part; last year I required discussions weekly. It has been brought to my attention however that my lectures are extensive and demanding. This year therefore I will give you one week to focus on reading and absorption before I expect you to perform. Naturally I will expect particularly insightful comments when the time comes (smile).

What I expect from you: This is a 400 level class, so thoughtful, developed ideas are a must. Show me 1) that you can rebut or explicate or defend the ideas of those who wrote before you, 2) that you are capable of explaining your ideas in detail, and (at least occasionally) in paragraph form, and 3) that you know that text *well*. No credit will be given for "I agree," "good job," or the equivalent; comments like these are friendly and civilized, but do not contribute to the body of human knowledge. Likewise, please ADD something to what has already been said.

All students are expected to make a meaningful contribute to class discussion at least **twice a week** – and yes, I WILL keep track. To be specific: I expect everyone to make

1. at least one substantial contribution between Sunday and Wednesday. Likewise, I expect
2. a second substantial contribution between Thursday and Saturday evening (before midnight) of each week.

Generally, I will wait until Thursday morning to read your contributions, and I will read them again at the end of the week. I will also add my own comments at least once a week. Please plan on checking my comments at least once a week. Note that while Discussions will be closed at the end of the week, discussions are always open on a “read only” basis. It is possible to search discussions by name as well as chronologically. Please, plan on checking for my comments (at the very least) before exams! Sometimes discussions are incomplete and lead astray by erroneous assumptions; I will take pains to correct these.

**Exams** and will consist of a mixture of short answer questions and essays. They will also be timed so that students will have to rely on what they already know. Exams are not (in theory) open book. Because however I do not approve of an “honor systems” (generally they penalize honest students while rewarding others, to say nothing of breeding distrust) I will not ask any question you can simply “look up.” Show me that you have mastered the texts, and can think about it. Show me that you have paid attention to form as well as content, in poetry especially. Show me that you can marshal evidence for your conclusions, and give examples when required.

**Research Proposals** are required by the day assigned. Proposals will be graded on a check basis; if I do not approve your proposal, I will always explain why.

### **Research Proposals, Amplified and Explained:**

Pick an author we have covered or are covering this semester. You may choose one poem or several; you may choose one tale or several, etc. Choose something you liked if possible; that usually works better. Then come up with something you want to prove that requires proof. Please don't choose a straw man argument anyone: that means don't make an argument that no reasonable person would disagree with (nothing “obvious”). Put some time and thought into this.

Once you've picked an argument, think about what sort of evidence you'd need to prove it, and that its obtainable. Motivation generally isn't directly provable for instance; we don't have any cameras that picked up how many women were in the average Renaissance theater, etc etc. Then write it up and send it to me via dropbox. Proposals should be short: half a page max. Short and sweet is fine;

vague isn't.

Bibliographies must be annotated; they must also be designed to answer a specific research question focusing on one or more of the authors assigned in this course. The research question must be typed immediately below "Bibliography" and above all entries, so that I can easily gauge their relevance. Bibliographies **may and should** change between their first appearance, and whatever you attach to your final research paper. Inevitably, you will find as you write that you don't need one article after all, or you need another source that you did not previously include. Think of bibliographies as living creatures: they morph. The bibliography grade however will be determined by the one you turn in on the due date.

How I Grade: The grading criteria are listed below, followed by the weight given to each.

1. You must include a well-focused Research Question or Statement above each bibliography. This cannot be a mere "subject;" neither can it be a vague fishing expedition ("feminism in Twelfth Night" for instance would not be enough; you would have to include a tentative conclusion.).
2. Bibliographies must conform to **MLA format (Required:look up MLA format online)**
3. Bibliographies must consist exclusively of **peer-reviewed articles**.
4. Bibliographies must consist of **literary sources**. This means the journals they are taken from must be literary. Other sources – historical, psychological, whatever – may be included only as "extras."
5. There must be at least **8 items in each bibliography**, all of which conform to the requirements
6. Each item must contain a **3-4 sentence description of the contents** of the paper. This must include a summary of the argument, and it must give me some idea of how the argument progresses.

When I grade your bibliographies, points will be distributed as follows:

1. Research Question or Statement: 20 pts. Half of this will be given for "good faith effort;" the other half will be allotted only to well conceived and focused Questions/Statements.
2. Peer Reviewed: 20 pts.
2. 8 items: 20 pts.
2. An analytical, 3-4 sentence description: 20 points.
2. MLA format: 10 pts. (I am reducing this, now that you know the format. Note however that you must alphabetize to gain these points).
2. Literary sources: 10 pts.
- 3.

Please remember that bibliographies are due on the week assigned. Late bibliographies will NOT as a rule be accepted, except by special permission in advance.

Students are welcome to add sources between the date the bibliography is due and the final paper. However, the final bibliography must closely resemble its predecessor; substitutions are not allowed. Finally, NO final papers will be accepted from students who have not turned in both a proposal and a bibliography in advance.

**Research Paper:** research papers require original thinking and careful research. They also require peer-reviewed sources. By now you should all know what that means. As a reminder however, this means no encyclopedias, no mere news sources, and no sites designed for students (as opposed to scholars). Primary sources may be used, but they do not count as criticism; criticism must be taken from secondary sources only. Please use MLA format, and plan on roughly 10 pages (2500-3500 words).

### **Advice Re Research Papers:**

- 1) First, the topic itself is fairly open. You have to write about one of the authors we have read in this class;
- 2) You also have to come up with your own Argument. To do that, you will need to analyze the author and come up with a conclusion of some sort that  
a) is susceptible of proof (that is, you can supply evidence to support it), and  
b) NEEDS to be proved. In other words, if no reasonable person would challenge it, the argument does not need to be proved; this is called a "straw man argument." Pollution is bad is a straw man argument; even polluters do not say pollution is GOOD (they just deny doing it). Don't argue something obvious; your idea should be challenging. Usually this means it takes real work to come up with.
- 3) Bear in mind that this is a research paper. Most of you should know how to do research already, but if you don't you may a) contact me, and b) contact the writing lab.

Warning: do NOT use google to do your research! As the Course Description indicates, I expect peer-reviewed articles. This means you need to go through the library. Academic Peer Review is one simple way to find peer-reviewed sources; those of you who are uncomfortable doing research might start there. MLA is a good literary source for research, but EBSCO was down recently, and it was too. MLA should be up again soon. Mainly though, remember it is up to you to find articles in relevant academic journals. Usually these are literary journals, but if your argument is historical you may use historical journals, etc.

No student crib sources, no chat lines, no desk dictionaries. Biblical translations may be cited if it is relevant to the argument, but it is not peer-reviewed (by definition), and so does not count as a secondary source.

When you quote sources: remember, the longer the quote, the longer and more demanding the analysis I expect of you, based on it. If you give me a long quote and then spend a line or two on it, I will assume you don't have enough to say, and are padding. Generally speaking, long quotes are not appropriate in papers of this length.

Finally, do not end your paragraphs with quotes. Your quote is there to establish what you are jumping off from (so that you can get to your argument quicker), or to establish what is accepted as known and what is not, or as evidence. It cannot speak for you however.

## **Plagiarism**

Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty (including collusion and selling academic products). Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise.

Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3])

## **Discrimination Statement**

*A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.*

## **Grievance Procedure**

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with

the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 ("Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation").

### **Courtesy Statement:**

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).

### **Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library**  
**Room 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

## **Notice for Future Teachers**

### **Teacher Certification Requirements**

If you plan to teach in the public schools, the following information is important. As of Fall 1999, only the Department of Literature and Languages can generate the bar code approval forms for students taking certification exams in English, ESL, and Spanish. Students MUST meet with the appropriate Advisors to begin the process of gaining bar code approval. This process includes an evaluation (whether or not students are at risk for failing the certification exam) and workshops or tutorials. Department Advisors are:

ENGLISH Dr. Bill Bolin, HL 314, 903-886-5272  
Bill\_Bolin@tamu-commerce.edu

ESL Dr. Robert Baumgardner, HL 229, 886-5254  
Robert\_Baumgardner@tamu-commerce.edu

SPANISH Ms. Inma Lyons, HL 317, 886-5273  
Inma\_Lyons@tamu-commerce.edu

### **Secondary TExES 8-12:**

This course has assignments that cover three competencies from Domain I: Integrated Language Arts, Diverse Learners, And The Study Of English (#1-3); four competencies from Domain II: Literature, Reading Processes And Skills For Reading Literary And Nonliterary Texts (#4-7); and two competencies from Domain III: Written Communication (#8-9).

Students who have taken this course will:

understand and apply knowledge of relationships among the language arts and between the language arts and other aspects of their lives and learning; Understand the continuum of language arts skills and expectations for students in grades 8-12, as specified in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS); Understand relationships among reading, writing, speaking, listening, and complex thinking; understand how the expressive uses of language (speaking, representing, writing) and the receptive uses of language (listening, reading, viewing) influence one another.

understand the structure and development of the English language; know rules of grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization in

standard English and are able to identify and edit nonstandard usage in his or her own discourse and the discourse of others; know how purpose, audience, and register affect discourse.

understand reading processes and how to apply those processes; understand and promote reading as an active process of constructing meaning; understand reader response; know how text characteristics and purposes for reading determine the selection of reading strategies and teaches students to apply skills and strategies; understand comprehension strategies to use before reading (for example, predicting, recalling prior knowledge), during reading (for example, note taking, mapping, paired reading), and after reading (for example, retelling, summarizing, responding); understand the role of social interaction in reading; know how reading experiences can enhance the understanding of and respect for diversity and increase knowledge of cultures.

understand reading skills and strategies for various types of nonliterary texts; demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics and uses of various types of research tools and information sources; understand steps and procedures for engaging in inquiry and research.

understand literary elements, genres, and movements and can demonstrate knowledge of a substantial body of literature; demonstrate knowledge of genres and their characteristics through analysis of literary texts; demonstrate knowledge of literary elements and devices, including ways in which they contribute to meaning and style, through analysis of literary texts; demonstrate knowledge of a substantial area of literature.

understand strategies for reading literary texts; demonstrate knowledge of various types of responses to literary texts (for example, experiential, aesthetic, pragmatic); know how to draw from wide reading in American literature; use technology to promote engagement in and comprehension of literature; know strategies for creating communities of readers and for promoting conversations about literature and ideas; understand strategies to use for analyzing and evaluating a variety of literary texts, both classic and contemporary; apply strategies to view literature as a source for exploring and interpreting human experience; apply effective strategies in exploring and discovering the personal and societal relevance of literature; understand relationships among literary works from various times and cultures; analyze how literary elements and devices contribute to meaning and synthesize and evaluate interpretations of literary texts.

understand writing as a recursive, developmental, integrative, and ongoing process; understand recursive stages in the writing process (for example, prewriting, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, publishing, and how to

provide effective feedback in all phases of the writing process; understand writing as a process that allows people to construct meaning, examine thinking, reflect, develop perspective, acquire new learning, and influence the world around them; apply writing conventions, including sentence and paragraph construction, spelling, punctuation, usage, and grammatical expression; apply criteria for evaluating their own written work and the writing of others; understand and promote the use of technology in all phases of the writing process and in various types of writing, including writing for research and publication.

understand effective writing and how to write effectively in a variety of forms and for various audiences, purposes, and contexts; understand the distinguishing features of various forms of writing (for example, reflective essay, autobiographical narrative, editorial, report, memorandum, summary/abstract, resume, play, short story, poem); apply skills and strategies for writing effectively in a variety of forms and for a variety of audiences, purposes, and contexts; understand and teaches how a writer's purpose and audience define appropriate language, writing style, and text organization; analyze the use of literary devices (for example, imagery, tone, dialogue, characterization, irony, figurative language) in writing; understand writing as a tool for inquiry, research, and learning; understand how to evaluate critically the sources they use for their writing; understands about plagiarism, academic honesty, and integrity as applied to written work and the presentation of information from different sources, including electronic sources; understand the importance of using acceptable formats for communicating research results and documenting sources (for example, manuals of style such as *Modern Language Association Handbook* [MLA style]).



