



A M B R O S E

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EN 440: English Literature of the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance Winter 2009

Instructor: Matthew McCabe
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Class Times: 1 pm – 2:15 pm W/F
Class Location: A 2212
Office Hours: T/Th 2:30 – 4:30

Required Texts:

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales*. Ed. V. A. Kolve and Glending Olson. 2nd ed.
New York: Norton, 2005.

The Renaissance and the Early Seventeenth Century. Ed. Joseph Black et al.
Peterborough: Broadview, 2006.

Note: The instructor will supplement the text with class handouts as needed.

Course Description:

By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries English began to rival Latin and French literature and started to display the kind of artful and enduring artistic expression that characterizes what we now regard as great literature. By tracing the literary expressions of Chaucer, Gower, Langland, and others into the Renaissance period and coupling that study with an examination of key figures such as Sidney, Spenser, Marlowe, Jonson, and Donne, this course will place on view the artistic, literary, and intellectual work that forms the foundation of later English literature and culture.

Course Objectives:

1. To sample the major authors, movements, and genres as they appear in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance.
2. To introduce the main critical issues relating to these periods.
3. To enhance students' critical skills.

Course Schedule and Readings:

January:

Wednesday

Friday

7 Introduction	9 Langland, <i>Piers Plowman</i> (selections) Simpson, "The Transformation of Meaning" (o)
14 <i>Piers Plowman</i>	16 Chaucer, <i>Parliament of Fowls</i> Benson, "Occasion of the <i>PF</i> " (r) Hill and Stilwell, "A Conduct Book for Richard" (o)
21 Gower, <i>Confessio Amantis</i> Pr. 1-31, 585-end; Book I.1-388; Book III (o) Donavin, "Violence" (r) Economou, "The Two Venuses and Earthly Love"(r)	23 <i>The General Prologue and The Knight's Tale</i> Miller, "Normative Longing in the <i>KnT</i> "
28 COMMUNITY DAY	30 (<i>KnT</i> continued) Curtis, "Biblical Analogy" (o)

February:

Wednesday	Friday
4 <i>Wife of Bath's P&T</i> <i>Franklin's P&T</i> Carruthers, "Painting of the Lions" (o)	6 <i>Wife of Bath</i>
11 <i>Pardoner's P&T</i> Burger, "Kissing the Pardoner" (o) Mitchell, "Pointing the Moral: The Friar, Summoner, and Pardoner's Satire" (r)	13 <i>Clerk's P&T</i> Mitchell, "CIT ... Ethical Monstrosity" (o)
18 SEMESTER BREAK	20 NO CLASS
25 More, <i>Utopia</i>: pages 12-33	27 <i>Utopia</i>: pages 33-50a Greenblatt, "At the Table of the Great" (r)

March:

Wednesday	Friday
4 <i>Utopia</i>: pages 50a-68 Beauchamp, "Imperfect Men in Perfect Soc" (o)	6 Tyndale, <i>Obedience</i> (selections) Greenblatt, "The Word of God" (r)
11 Wyatt: pages 107-14 Walker, "Sir Thomas Wyatt" (r)	13 Wyatt continued Walker, "Tyranny Condemned" (r)
18 Elizabeth I: pages 292-300 "Culture: A Portfolio" (pages 301-18) Bell, "Elizabeth and the Politics..." (r)	20 Spenser, <i>Faerie Queene</i>: pages 139-62 Woodcock, "The Fairy Queen Figure" (r)
25 <i>FQ</i>: Book 1, Cantos 4-7 Roston, "Spenser and the Pagan Gods" (r)	27 <i>FQ</i>, Book 1, Cantos 8-12 Norbrook, " <i>FQ</i> and Elizabethan politics" (r)

April:

Wednesday	Friday
1 Sidney, <i>The Defence of Poesy</i>, selections Kinney, "The Position of Poetry" (r) Tuve, "The Problem and What it Involves" (r) Tuve, "The Criterion of Decorum" (r)	3 Donne Empson, "Donne the Spaceman" (r) Rajan, "Nothing Sooner Broke" (o) PROPOSAL, WORKING THESIS, AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

8 Marlowe, <i>Doctor Faustus</i> Snow, “Doctor Faustus and the Ends of Desire” (r) Traister, “Master of Self-Delusion” (r)	10 <i>Doctor Faustus</i> continued Sinfield, “Reading Faustus’s God” (r)
15 Lanyer, from <i>Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum</i> Jonson, “To Penshurst” Lewalski, “Of God and Good Women” (r)	ESSAY DUE MONDAY APRIL 20

NB: Students are required to read all the primary texts, listed above in **bold**; these readings are our primary concern. Students are strongly advised to read as many as possible of the critical texts, listed above in regular type, as an aid to class discussion and to essay preparation. In addition, students are required to read and compose a précis (see below) of a minimum of four of the secondary readings listed above in regular type. Texts marked **(o)** can be found online; texts marked **(r)** will be made available on the reserve shelves in the library.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Students should read the assigned text(s) before class and take care to participate in class discussion. Assignments are due on the dates specified. **Reading reports and précis must be handed in at the beginning of class on the date the readings are due or they will not be accepted.**

Grading:

Participation	20%
Reading reports (4 at 6% each)	24%
Précis exercise (3 at 6% each)	18%
Proposal and bibliography	6%
Essay	<u>32%</u>
	100

Reading Reports:

You are required to produce **five** reading reports offering original critical reflections on the **primary texts** on the syllabus. Each report must focus on one or more primary text assigned for a given day and it must be handed in **at the beginning of class on which these readings are due**. A good length is 4 pages. You may wish to consider the recurring themes of the course—e.g. public life, authority and submission, love and marriage, gender, knowledge, Church and faith, rhetoric and poetics, history—and reflect on how a text conveys one or more of these themes. How does the language of the text support these themes? How does it subvert them? How can it be said that the text “conveys” these themes at all? What kinds of relationships do these thematic concerns reveal between this text and others we have read? Alternatively, you may wish to take your point of departure from the critical literature on the primary text or texts. If you do this, however, it is not enough to reproduce the critical perspective of someone else; I need to see your own engagement with the primary text.

Précis Exercises:

You are required to produce **four** précis of the **critical texts (articles and book chapters)** on the syllabus. A précis is an accurate, concise distillation of the argument of a single article or book chapter. Each précis is devoted to a single critical text on our syllabus and must be handed in **at the beginning of class on which this critical reading is due**. Each précis must be no more than **two pages in length**.

Proposal, Working Thesis, and Bibliography:

By the time you turn in this assignment (due March 20), your work preparing the essay should be well underway. You may write the essay on any primary text (or texts) on our syllabus and adopt whatever critical perspective you wish. Describe your project in a proposal of 300 words. You must include a working thesis that is significant and shows evidence of engagement with the critical commentary on your text or texts. You must also include a brief annotated bibliography (a list of bibliographic entries, each of which gives the publication information for a critical work in MLA style followed by a short (2 or 3 sentence) summary of the work and its value for your project).

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	96-100	
A	91-95	Excellent
A-	86-90	
B+	82-85	
B	75-81	Good
B-	72-74	
C+	68-71	
C	63-67	Satisfactory
C-	60-62	
D+	59-59	
D	50-55	Minimal Pass
F	0-49	Failure

Important Notes:

Plagiarism in any of its forms will not be tolerated.

Students may not submit work done for another class.

Students are responsible for all the information given in class and also for any changes to the syllabus announced in class.

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies of as are stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar.