

Term Paper: Requirements and Suggested Topics

Assignment: Write a paper with at least a loose thematic connection to the seminar topic. The length of your paper depends on your module: (within ten percent of) 5,000 words for a first graduate course in medieval studies, 7,500 words for a graduate or undergraduate follow-up course, and 48,000 characters in the Comparative Literature module.

Some Possible Topics

The following list is intended to help you *find* a topic, but you don't have to limit yourself to the options listed. While you may absolutely copy out a topic directly from this list, it is your own responsibility to formulate a research question and develop a thesis. Remember that originality of argument (and by implication originality of research question) is a factor in the assessment of your paper (see marking grid overleaf).

Paper topics for this course may address any aspect of the literary environment, whether natural, social, architectural, spiritual, or otherwise, in Middle English poetry or prose. Papers on Old Norse or medieval literary environments in general are also welcome, as are papers on most any aspect of the texts read this term. Here are some domains within which you may choose to look for a topic:

- Darkness
- Dreams
- Visionary space
- Ghosts and ghastly settings
- The functions and symbolism of cities
- Locating the devil in everyday environments
- Forestry and forest economies in medieval history and literature
- Economy and ecology
- The hunt in medieval history and literature
- The sea in medieval history and literature
- Earthly landscapes, spiritual overlays
- The wonders of the east
- Otherworld visions
- The road to Jerusalem
- Depicting Rome
- Saracens in the landscape
- Arthurian geographies
- The concept of stewardship in medieval literature
- The church as a literary environment
- Liminal space and liminal agents (e.g. hermits, monsters, shepherds, witches, exiles)
- *Troilus and Criseyde*
- *Sir Launfal*
- Chaucer's Dream-Visions
- *Sir Dégaré*
- *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- etc.

Preliminary Assignments

Have a **paper topic** ready for in-class discussion on **24 May**. You are expected to submit a full preliminary **sentence outline** of your paper by **28 June**, though earlier is always better, as you'll receive detailed feedback and pointers on how to proceed.

Marking Grid

The following marking grid indicates the considerations used to mark papers for this course (but not their weighting):

Aspect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Argument (quality, originality)										
Structure										
Close reading & analysis										
Structural use of primary sources										
Use of secondary sources										
Grasp of source language										
Cultural context										
Command of academic English										
Mechanics (style, referencing, formatting)										
Length										

Please remember to read, sign, and attach the ethical scholarship declaration available at <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/erkl%C3%A4rung-f%C3%BCr-hausarbeiten/199051.html>