

Introduction to Medieval English Literature and Culture

B.EP.204; M.EP.02b; M.EP.02b-L; M.EP.02c

Term:	Summer 2018	Instructor:	Dr P. S. Langeslag
Time:	Tue 10–12	Office:	SEP 2.306
Room:	VG 0.110	Phone:	0551/3919706
Credits:	6–8 (see module description)	Office hours:	Tue 2–3
Prerequisites:	none	E-mail:	planges@uni-goettingen.de

Course Description

This course introduces students to the corpus and culture of Old and Middle English literature and trains them to read, translate, and interpret prose and verse texts from these traditions. Given the differences between Modern English and Old English in particular, the central intellectual challenge will be to come to grips with the grammar and vocabulary of at least one entirely new language. To accomplish this task, a considerable amount of class time will be spent becoming acquainted with the grammar and the translation of early English. In addition, students will learn to analyze medieval texts in their formal, literary, and cultural aspects. **This course is combined in all modules with the Medieval Studies lecture course (“Medieval English Literature 1200–1500”). Your knowledge of the lecture material will be assessed as part of the seminar exam.**

Aims

Students will

- Learn to read and translate Old English;
- Improve their reading fluency of Middle English;
- Learn to analyze medieval narrative;
- Hone their skills writing close commentaries.

Assessment

Written exam (120 minutes, covering both the seminar and the lecture course). Students are also expected to hand in a close commentary, which will not be marked but whose timely submission is a prerequisite for taking the exam.

Required Texts and Resources

Mitchell, Bruce, and Fred C. Robinson. *A Guide to Old English*. 8th ed. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
(Earlier editions are equally admissible; the SEP library *Lehrbuchsammlung* has dozens of 7th eds.)

Additional materials will be provided on StudIP and/or handed out in class.

Schedule

wk	date	topic	reading
1	10 Apr	Basics and Nominals	Mitchell & Robinson §§ 1–86
2	17 Apr	Verbs	M&R §§ 87–130; Prognostics (handout)
3	24 Apr	Modals, Adverbs, Syntax, Translation Strategies	M&R §§ 131–147, 206–211; Alfred's Preface to the <i>Pastoral Care</i> (M&R text 5)
4	1 May	NO CLASS	Review Old English grammar and paradigms!
5	8 May	The Corpus of Old English	Alfred's Preface to the <i>Pastoral Care</i>
6	15 May	The Close Commentary Format	Alfred's Preface to the <i>Pastoral Care</i>
7	22 May	NO CLASS	READING WEEK
8	29 May	The Exam Format	<i>Dream of the Rood</i> (M&R text 14)
9	5 June		<i>Dream of the Rood</i>
10	12 June		<i>Dream of the Rood</i> ; HAND IN COMMENTARY
11	19 June	Middle English	<i>Dream of the Rood</i>
12	26 June	Chaucer	<i>The Franklin's Tale</i> (StudIP)
13	3 July	The Corpus of Middle English	<i>The Franklin's Tale</i>
14	10 July	Wrap-Up	<i>The Franklin's Tale</i>
15	17 July	EXAM, 10:00 sharp–12:00	

Diversity Statement

This course is run with the understanding that students bring a variety of backgrounds into the classroom in such domains as socioeconomics, appearance, culture, religion, political views, disability, gender, age, family situation, and sexual identity. With different backgrounds come different needs. If you feel your needs or those of a fellow student require special attention or are being compromised, please feel free to make this known to me by whatever channel seems most appropriate. (For more serious concerns, the Department, Faculty, and University each have their own points of contact as well.) I will treat all requests seriously and with confidentiality, and will seek to make accommodations within my abilities and reason. At the same time, you too owe it to your fellow students to treat them with respect regardless of their background and identity. University should be awesome — for everyone.