When completed, this proposal should be submitted to the Office of the Associate Provost for consideration by the College Curriculum Committee.

1. Department (s) proposing this course: English

2. Title of the course: Topics in Medieval Literature
   Abbreviated title (up to 20 characters): TOPICS LIT Medieval

3. Level of this course:
   ___100 Level ___200 Level ___X___300 Level ___400 Level

4. Course description as it is to appear in the College bulletin:
   (Write in complete sentences except for prerequisites, hours and credits.)
   Topics in Medieval Literature will examine select literary movements, authors, and ideas with an eye to the formal features of texts as well as the social, historical, and political contexts in which they appear. The course will approach the canon for this period not as a fixed entity but as a body of work consistently open to reevaluation and critique; alternative texts, voices, and subject positions relevant to the topic(s) will be included. As a means of understanding the literature of the period, the course may focus on a literary genre or convention (e.g., epic, romance) or an important theme (e.g., chivalric and warrior codes, heresy and devotion, impermanence, erotic love). Each semester individual instructors will anchor the course in specific sub-topics, primary texts, cultures, historical moments, etc., depending on their own areas of specialization.
   Pre-requisites: ENG 102/201
   Co-Requisites: LIT 2XX (Introduction to Literary Study) or permission of the Instructor

5. Has this course been taught on an experimental basis?
   ___X__No
   ___Yes: Semester (s) and year (s):
   Teacher (s):
   Enrollment (s):
   Prerequisites (s):

6. Prerequisites:
   Pre-requisites: ENG 102/201
   Co-requisite: Literature 2XX (Introduction to Literary Study) or permission of the instructor.

7. Number of: class hours ___3__ lab hours ___0__ credits ___3__

Approved by Curriculum Committee September 7, 2007, prepared for College Council.
8. Brief rationale for the course:

*Topics in Medieval Literature* is one of six historically specific topics courses. Students majoring in English are required to take four. The topics courses give students an awareness of the ways that literature is situated in history and how literary forms and concerns differ historically. *Topics in Medieval Literature* gives students insight into such literary groupings as heroic poetry, beast fables and scurrilous tales, courtly romances, and mystical visions as forms and genres unique to their political, cultural, and aesthetic needs while continuing to build critical skills applicable to English majors such as close-reading, analysis, organized thought, and effective writing.

9a. Knowledge and performance objectives of this course:
(What knowledge will the student be expected to acquire and what conceptual and applied skills will be learned in this course?)

**KNOWLEDGE**

1. Students will gain familiarity with major themes, forms, and authors of the medieval period.
2. Students will analyze literary genres common to the medieval period.

**PERFORMANCE**

1. By close reading of primary texts, class discussion, and writing response papers, students will develop critical reading and analytical skills.
2. Through a series of graduated writing assignments students will sharpen their rhetorical and argumentative skills and their ability to incorporate textual evidence.
3. By completing a term paper students will learn to perform basic, supporting research that contextualizes an author or literary idea within a larger discourse of the period studied.

9b. Information literacy:
(Indicate what sorts of information seeking skills will be enhanced by this course, e.g., use of the internet, access to specialized data bases, literature search skills, etc.)

Students will be required to locate primary and secondary sources germane to the topic of the course through specialized databases such as the MLA Bibliography or Gale’s Literary Index on the Web as well as perform library catalogue searches for books.

10. Recommended writing assignments:
(Indicate types of writing assignments and number of pages of each type. Writing assignments should satisfy the College’s requirements for writing across the curriculum.)

1. eight 1-2 page response papers
2. one 10-page essay
11. Will this course be part of any major(s) or program(s)?
   ___No
   X Yes. Major or program: **English**
   What part of the major? (Prerequisite, core, skills, etc.)

   **Part Two: Historical Perspectives**
   Topics in Early Modern Literature is one of six historically specific Topics courses.

12. Is this course related to other specific courses?
   ___No
   X Yes. Indicate which course(s) and what the relationship will be (e.g., prerequisite, sequel, etc.).
   **Co-requisite: LIT 2xx Introduction to Literary Study**

13. It is strongly advised to meet with a member of the library faculty before answering question 14.

   If this course was taught on an experimental basis, were the existing library, computer, lab or other resources adequate for this course?
   Yes
   No. With whom has this been discussed? What has been recommended?

   If this course was not taught on an experimental basis, are library, computer, lab or other resources necessary for this course?
   X No
   ___Yes. With whom has this been discussed? What has been recommended?

   **Ellen Sexton, 2/26/07**

   The English Department is and has been engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the Library regarding improving the collection to adequately support the proposed English major and the associated new courses. Money additional to the regular Library budget is being provided by the College to fund new acquisitions. The Library subscribes to many relevant serial titles already, thanks to the collaborative resource sharing of electronic materials with other CUNY libraries. However, the monograph (and other book) collections in this subject area do need to be augmented. The English Department is providing the Library with lists of titles for acquisition.
14. Syllabus and bibliography:
Attach a sample syllabus for this course. It should be based on the College’s model syllabus. The sample syllabus must include a week by week or class by class listing of topics, readings, other assignments, tests, papers due, or other scheduled parts of the course. It must also include proposed texts. It should indicate how much various assignments or tests will count towards final grades. (If this course has been taught on an experimental basis, an actual syllabus may be attached, if suitable.)
In addition, a bibliography in APA format for this course must be attached to this proposal.
Attached

15. This section is to be completed by the chair (s) of the department (s) proposing the course.
Name (s) of the Chairperson (s): Jon Christian Suggs

Has this proposal been approved at a meeting of the department curriculum committee?
___No ___x_Yes: Meeting date: 3/12/07

When will this course be taught?
Every semester, starting _________________
One semester each year, starting spring 08
Once every two years, starting ___
How many sections of this course will be offered? ___01_____

Who will be assigned to teach this course?
Toy Fung-Tung   Ann Huse
Valerie Allen    Pat Licklider
Richard Zeikowitz

Is this proposed course similar to or related to any course or major offered by any other department (s)?
___X_No
___Yes. What course (s) or major (s) is this course similar or related to?

Did you consult with department (s) offering similar or related courses or majors?
___X_Not applicable ___No ___x_Yes
If yes, give a short summary of the consultation process and results.

Will any course be withdrawn if this course is approved?
___X_No
___Yes, namely:

Signature (s) of chair of Department (s) proposing this course:
Date: 3/26/07___________________

Approved by Curriculum Committee September 7, 2007, prepared for College Council.
JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
The City University of New York
Sample Syllabus for Lit 3XX: Topics in Medieval Literature: Gender and Sexuality in Chaucer
Professor Richard E. Zeikowitz
Office: 1261N Office Tel: 212-484-1192 E-Mail: rzeikowitz@jjay.cuny.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Topics in Medieval Literature will examine select literary movements, authors, and ideas with an eye to the formal features of texts as well as the social, historical, and political contexts in which they appear. As a means of understanding the literature of the period, the course may focus on a literary genre or convention (e.g., epic, romance) or an important theme (e.g., chivalric and warrior codes, heresy and devotion, impermanence, erotic love).

In this course, we consider in detail the theme of gender in the literature of (primarily later) medieval England. We will consider in particular the various “states” of womanhood (wife, virgin, widow), chivalric male fashioning and male friendship, and same-sex relations. Given the diversity of his work, the poetry of Geoffrey Chaucer will figure large among our texts, which also include writing by women, romance, debate poetry, theological and medical treatises, urban drama, and a historical case of male prostitution from the late fourteenth century.
Pre-requisites: ENG 102/201
Co-requisite: Literature 2XX (Introduction to Literary Study) or permission of the instructor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
● Students will gain familiarity with social gender norms and representations (fictional and non-fictional) of men and women in medieval England.
● Students will analyze literary genres (romance, drama, fabliaux, etc.) common to the medieval period.
● By close reading of primary texts, class discussion, and writing response papers, students will develop critical reading and analytical skills.
● Through a series of graduated writing assignments students will sharpen their rhetorical and argumentative skills and their ability to incorporate textual evidence.
● By completing a term paper students will learn to perform basic, supporting research that contextualizes an author or literary idea within a larger discourse of the period studied.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Texts on Reserve:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Response Papers: 8 papers (1 - 2 TYPED pages each) from 9 assigned.
Analysis of a particular character or interactions between characters in terms of acceptable/unacceptable gender or sexuality as defined in that text; comparison between two characters either in the same work or two different works; interpretation of Chaucer’s “agenda” in a particular work. Use of quoted passages from the text to support main points.

Essay: 10 pages (use of at least three outside sources)
Ideally an expansion of a response paper, but may also choose a new topic. Required use of at least two outside sources. Outline of proposed paper must be approved by professor.

Exams: Two non-cumulative exams (one on *The Canterbury Tales*, the other on *Troilus and Criseyde*).
Identification of brief quotations from the text; brief answers to questions about content, essay (comparing characters in several works for Exam 1, detailed analysis of one character for Exam 2).

Discussion Leading: pairs of students lead one 15 minute class discussion of a reading assignment (5%)

Attendance: More than three absences will result in the lowering of “Attendance” grade by grade per subsequent absence. Arriving more than 5 minutes late, or leaving more than 5 minutes early will count as absence.

COURSE GRADES
Final course grades will be determined based on the following percentages:
Response Papers (25%)
Essay (15%)
Exam 1 (25%)
Exam 2 (25%)
Discussion Leading (5%)
Attendance (5%)

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM (from the John Jay College Undergraduate Bulletin)
Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible

Approved by Curriculum Committee September 7, 2007, prepared for College Council.
only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The Library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1  Introduction
Texts: John Mirk, Marriage Sermon; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*
Topic: Theological Backgrounds
Critical Reading: Ian Maclean

Week 2  Texts: *Women’s Secrets, The Trotaula*
Topic: Medical Backgrounds
Critical Reading: Ian Maclean, Thomas Laqueur, Vern Bullough
Response Paper 1

Week 3  Texts: Chaucer’s *Miller’s Tale, Shipman’s Tale, Merchant’s Tale*
Topic: Women and Fabliaux
Response Paper 2

Week 4  Texts: Christine de Pisan, *Romance of the Rose*
Topic: The “querelle des femmes”
Response Paper 3

Week 5  Texts: *Holy Maidenhood*, The Book of Margery Kempe
Topic: Virginity
Response Paper 4

Week 6  Text: *Ancrene Wisse*
Topic: Solitude and Relationships between Women
Response Paper 5

Week 7  Texts: *The Goodman of Paris*, Chaucer’s *Clerk’s Tale*
Topic: Wifely Obedience
Review

Week 8  Exam 1

Approved by Curriculum Committee September 7, 2007, prepared for College Council.
| Week 9    | Text: *Owl and Nightingale*, Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde*  
|          | Topic: Courtly Love  
|          | Response Paper 6 |
| Week 10  | Text: Malory’s *Morte DArthur*  
|          | Topic: Arthurian Romance--Chivalry  
|          | Response Paper 7 |
| Week 11  | Text: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*  
|          | Topic: Male Relationships  
|          | Response Paper 8 |
| Week 12  | Text: Chaucer’s *Pardoner’s Portrait*, Prologue, and Tale  
|          | Topic: Male Desire and Aggression  
|          | Response Paper 9 |
| Week 13  | Text: The Questioning of John Rykener, A Male Cross-Dressing  
|          | Topic: Same-Sex Desire  
|          | Prostitute, 1395 |
| Week 14  | Text: The York Plays, *Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*  
|          | Topic: The Body of Christ  
|          | Review |
| Finals Week | Exam 2 |
BIBLIOGRAPHY

General:


Sample Syllabus:

Dinshaw, C. (1999). Getting medieval: sexualities and communities, pre- and

Approved by Curriculum Committee September 7, 2007, prepared for College Council.


