

The City University of New York

New Course Proposal

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 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?

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

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
 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
 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?

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 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)?

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?

Not applicable No Yes

If yes, give a short summary of the consultation process and results.

Will any course be withdrawn if this course is approved?

No

Yes, namely:

Signature (s) of chair of Department (s) proposing this course:

Date: 3/26/07_____

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

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Riverside Chaucer*. Ed. Larry D. Benson. 3rd edn Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Malory, Thomas. *Le Morte Darthur*. Norton Critical Editions. Ed. Stephen H.A. Shepherd. Norton, 2003.

Texts on Reserve:

Burger, Glenn. *Chaucer's Queer Nation*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome. "Masoch/Lancelotism." *New Literary History* 28 (1997): 231-60

Dinshaw, Carolyn. *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*. Durham: Duke Up, 1999.

Hansen, Elaine Tuttle. *Chaucer and the Fictions of Gender*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1992.

Lochrie, Karma, Peggy McCracken, and James A. Schultz, eds. *Constructing Medieval Sexuality*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997.

Zeikowitz, Richard E. *Homoeroticism and Chivalry: Discourses of Male Same-Sex Desire in the Fourteenth Century*. New York: Palgrave, 2003.

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

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, <i>Summa Theologiae</i> Topic: Theological Backgrounds Critical Reading: Ian Maclean
Week 2	Texts: <i>Women's Secrets, The Trotula</i> Topic: Medical Backgrounds Critical Reading: Ian Maclean, Thomas Laqueur, Vern Bullough Response Paper 1
Week 3	Texts: Chaucer's <i>Miller's Tale, Shipman's Tale, Merchant's Tale</i> Topic: Women and Fabliaux Response Paper 2
Week 4	Texts: Christine de Pisan. <i>Romance of the Rose</i> Topic: The "querelle des femmes" Response Paper 3
Week 5	Texts: <i>Holy Maidenhood, The Book of Margery Kempe</i> Topic: Virginitiy Response Paper 4
Week 6	Text: <i>Ancrene Wisse</i> Topic: Solitude and Relationships between Women Response Paper 5
Week 7	Texts: <i>The Goodman of Paris, Chaucer's Clerk's Tale</i> Topic: Wifely Obedience Review
Week 8	Exam 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

General:

Fossier, Robert, ed. (1986). Trans. Janet Sondheimer. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages, Volume 1, 350-950*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fossier, Robert, ed. (1986). Trans. Stuart Airlie and Robyn Marsack. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages, Volume 2, 950-1250*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fossier, Robert, ed. (1986). Trans. Sarah Hanbury-Tension. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages, Volume 3, 1250-1520*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, George. *The Oxford History of Medieval Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Minnis, Alastair, and Ian Johnson, eds (). *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume 2, The Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sample Syllabus:

Bullough Vern L., and James A. Brundage, eds (1996). *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*. New York and London: Garland.

Laqueur, Thomas (1990). *Making Sex: Bodies and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Laqueur, Thomas W (2003). *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation*. New York: Zone Books.

Maclean, Ian (1980). *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Aers, D. (1988). *Community, gender, and individual identity: English writing, 1350-1430*. London: Routledge.

Beidler, P., ed. (1996). *Geoffrey Chaucer: the wife of Bath*. Boston: Bedford.

Beidler, P. (1998). *Masculinities in Chaucer: approaches to maleness in the Canterbury tales and Troilus and Crisyede*. Cambridge: Brewer.

Bisson, L. (1998). *Chaucer and the late medieval world*. New York: St. Martin's.

Blamires, Alcuin (1997). *The Case for Women in Medieval Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Burger, G. (2003). *Chaucer's queer nation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Riverside Chaucer*. Ed. Larry D. Benson. 3rd edn Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome, and Bonnie Wheeler, eds (1997). *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*. New York and London: Garland.

Crane, S. (1994). *Gender and romance in Chaucer's Canterbury tales*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dinshaw, Carolyn (1989). *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

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

- postmodern*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Fradenburg, L. and Carla Freccero, eds. *Premodern Sexualities*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Hanawalt, Barbara A. and David Wallace, eds (1996). *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*. Medieval Cultures 9. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hansen, E. (1992). *Chaucer and the fictions of gender*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hansen, E. (1998). The powers of silence: the case of the clerk's Griselda. In *Critical essays on Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. Stillinger, pp. 133-49. New York: G. K. Hall.
- Kay, Sarah, and Miri Rubin, eds (1994). *Framing Medieval Bodies*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Lees, Clare A., ed (1994). *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*. Medieval Cultures 7. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Malory, Thomas. *Le Morte Darthur*. Norton Critical Editions. Ed. Stephen H.A. Shepherd. Norton, 2003.
- Shoaf, R., ed. (1992). *Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde: "Subjit to alle Poesye."* Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies.
- Sturges, Robert Stuart (2005). *Chaucer's Pardoner and Gender Theory: Bodies of Discourse*.
A Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge. Ed. Clifford Davidson. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1993.
- The Trotula: An English Translation of the Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine*. Ed. Monica Helen Green. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Women's Secrets: A Translation of Pseudo-Albertus Magnus' De Secretis Mulierum with Commentaries*. Trans. Helen Rodnite Lemay. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.
- The York Plays*. Ed. Richard Beadle. London: Edward Arnold, 1982.
- Zeikowitz, R. (2003). *Homoeroticism and chivalry: discourses of male same-sex desire in the fourteenth century*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.