

Fall 2015

ENGL 4421

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Recommended Citation

Marti, Kevin, "ENGL 4421" (2015). *University of New Orleans Syllabi*. Paper 466.
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SYLLABUS

English 4421-001 * Chaucer * Fall 2015 * meets Tues-Thurs 2:00-3:15pm in LA 172 * Dr. Kevin Marti * Office: LA 173 * 280-7248 * kmarti@uno.edu * office hrs.: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:15-2:00pm, 3:15-4:00pm; Mondays 8:45-9:45pm (please make an appointment)

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNED READINGS, NOT A SCHEDULE OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.

Students are required to read material by the beginning of the class period for which it is assigned. Even though at some points we will deliberately get a week or more behind the reading assignments in our classroom discussion, I reserve the right to give pop quizzes on the more recent reading assignments. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT THAT STUDENTS KEEP UP WITH THIS READING SCHEDULE, RATHER THAN READ JUST ENOUGH TO KEEP UP WITH WHAT WE ARE COVERING IN THE CLASSROOM. It is especially important to bear in mind that students will be assigned to begin reading the Knight's Tale long before we complete classroom discussion of the General Prologue; students will be expected to have read the entire Knight's Tale before the first day we discuss it in class. Students who just try to read enough to keep up with class coverage will find that class discussion will suddenly catch up with the syllabus and leave them behind. The reading assignments are much heavier for some weeks than for others, so plan your time carefully. Because every student must participate in every class discussion, every student must keep up with the reading. Read all assigned Middle English lines very slowly and carefully, and as you do so also read all of the notes that pertain to those lines at the bottom of the pages.

1. 8/20 Introduction, course policies, syllabus
2. 8/25 Gen. Prol., first third
3. 8/27 Gen. Prol., second third; xxix-xlv on "Language and Versification." Pick one character described in the General Prologue and memorize the first two lines of that character's portrait
4. 9/1 Gen. Prol., third third (finishing reading). Memorize lines 3-4 of your character's portrait.
5. 9/3 Knight's Tale, first third
6. 9/8 Knight's Tale, second third. Memorize lines 5-6 of char.
7. 9/10 Knight's Tale, third third (finish reading)
8. 9/15 Miller's Prologue and Tale.
9. 9/17 Reeve's Prologue and Tale. Man of Law's Tale. Memorize lines 7-8 of char.
10. 9/22 Cook's Prologue and Tale
11. 9/24 Wife of Bath's Prologue. Memorize lines 9-10 of char.
12. 9/29 Wife of Bath's Tale.
13. 10/1 MIDTERM REPORTS DUE. Review for exam.
14. 10/6 MIDTERM EXAM
15. 10/8 Friar's Prologue and Tale
16. 10/13 Summoner's Prologue and Tale
- final date to drop course or resign from university 10/14

fall break: no class 10/15

- 17.10/20 Clerk's Prologue and Tale
- 18.10/22 Merchant's Prologue and Tale
- 19.10/27 Squire's Intro. and Tale
- 20.10/29 Franklin's Prologue and Tale
- 21.11/3 Overview of relationships among tales of the Marriage Group
- 22.11/5 Physician's Tale
- 23.11/10 Pardoner's Intro., Prologue, and Tale; skip Shipman's Tale
- 24.11/12 Prioress' Prologue and Tale
- 25.11/17 Prologue and Tale of Sir Thopas. Skip the Tale of Melibee and the Monk's Prologue and Tale.
- 26.11/19 Nun's Priest's Prologue, Tale, and Epilogue 252-261; Retraction 328.
- 27.11/24 Student oral reports on term papers.
- 28.12/1 Student oral reports on term papers.
- 29.12/3 TERM PAPERS DUE. Review for final exam.

FINAL EXAM: Will take place in the usual classroom, Thursday, December 10, 3:00-5:00pm.

NOTE THAT FINAL EXAM BEGINS ONE HOUR LATER THAN OUR USUAL MEETING TIME.

COURSE POLICIES

My office is LA 173, but I often hold office hours in the classroom right after each class ends. If I am not in my office at the beginning of office hours, check the room of the preceding class posted on my door, check back in a few minutes, or email me. Please make an appointment rather than simply dropping by during my office hours; otherwise, I cannot guarantee that you will find me available. Frequently faculty meetings take me away from office hours; also, often a line of other students with appointments may make it impossible to meet with you if you have no appointment.

THERE ARE NO EMERGENCIES IN THIS COURSE. Whatever problem you have, we will take care of it in due time. If for reasons beyond your control you cannot complete a paper on time, I will accept it late with no penalty, but be prepared to document your excuse. If you have no good excuse for a late paper, I will still accept it late, but with a penalty: the later I receive it, the lower the grade. In either case, don't panic if I'm not available at the moment of your crisis; just finish the paper when you can, and we will work things out later. I will accept no papers turned in after the final exam. All assignments and due dates are outlined in great detail in the course policies and syllabus handed out on the first day of class. Students have several weeks to ask any questions about the midterm report, term paper, midterm exam and final exam. Failure to complete any ONE of the following four course requirements will result in a grade of F for the entire course: midterm report, term paper, midterm exam, final exam. **ALL MIDTERM REPORTS AND TERM PAPERS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN THE FORM OF PRINTED HARD COPIES, NOT IN THE FORM OF EMAILS OR ATTACHMENTS TO EMAILS.** Do not assume that I have received a midterm report or term paper from you if you have emailed it to me.

Required text: Larry Benson, ed., *The Wadsworth Chaucer*, 3rd ed., Wadsworth Cengage Learning
ISBN: 1-133-31628-X

Grading:

Midterm report on term paper	15%
Term paper	20%
Oral report on term paper	5%
Midterm exam	25%
Final exam	25%
Class participation	10%

Term paper: It must be computer-printed, double-spaced, at least ten pages plus works consulted. Works consulted must contain at least seven scholarly sources. Papers must evidence substantial work on a topic chosen by the student, and should not simply restate information discussed in class (although class discussion will help students understand how to perform the kind of analysis appropriate for papers). Papers should evidence substantial reading in Chaucer scholarship. Do not submit term papers or midterm reports in special binders; a staple in the upper left corner will suffice. Use MLA style. Term papers and midterm reports must be submitted in hard copy rather than by email; do not assume that I have received any written work that you email me. Do not include an outline with the term paper. The list of works consulted for the term paper should not be annotated. None of the sources in the works consulted have to be referred to in the term paper.

Midterm report: This report is my way of seeing if you have done about half of the work on your term paper by midterm. It must be computer-printed, double-spaced, at least four pages (full, not partial, pages). It should be as polished and professional as the term paper itself. The first two pages, entitled “Abstract,” will condense into two pages a summary of the entire argument of the term paper you propose to write. The third page, entitled “Outline,” will be a detailed (tentative) outline of the structure of your paper’s argument, so it will serve as the outline for your Abstract as well. The Outline may only contain complete sentences. Write a one-sentence thesis at the top of the outline, then write about three main supporting arguments (one sentence each, labeled with roman numerals). Under each main supporting argument write at least two subsidiary arguments (one sentence each, labeled with capital letters), each of which supports the main supporting argument above it. The fourth page, entitled “Annotated Works Consulted,” must contain references to at least seven relevant sources (scholarly articles or books; Web sites may be included but do not count towards the required seven sources unless the source is also available in print or unless it is an online source contained in a library database) that you have consulted. Use MLA style. Beside each reference, write an annotation: a two-sentence summary of what that source contributes to your argument (the specific contribution to your argument, not the general topic of the source). Neither abstracts nor term papers are required to quote or cite any of the sources in the list of works consulted for either the midterm report or the term paper. In other words, the Annotated Works Consulted list for the midterm report is not a list of works cited, and the Works Consulted list for the term paper is also not a list of works cited. You are free to

modify your topic or change it completely after you submit your midterm report. Midterm reports which do not adhere to all of these instructions will receive a lower grade than those that do. NOTE: THERE IS NO PENALTY FOR EXCEEDING MINIMUM PAGE LENGTHS FOR THE TERM PAPER OR MIDTERM REPORT OR ANY PART OF THE TERM PAPER OR MIDTERM REPORT. SO IN THE CASE OF THE MIDTERM REPORT, FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE ABSTRACT EXCEEDS TWO PAGES, THE OUTLINE MAY BE ON PAGE FOUR AND THE ANNOTATED WORKS CONSULTED MAY BE ON PAGE FIVE OR ON PAGES FIVE THROUGH SIX IF THE ANNOTATED WORKS CONSULTED IS LONGER THAN ONE PAGE.

Oral reports on term papers: At the third-, and second-to-last meetings each student will make an informal five-minute oral presentation to the class that sketches out the main arguments and evidence presented in the student's term paper. Class members will provide feedback to help guide each student in completing the term paper.

Exams: There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The final exam will only test material covered since the midterm. Each exam will contain an objective portion (identification and short answer) and an essay portion. Quizzes: Unannounced quizzes will be given on the reading. No make-up quizzes. Quiz grades will be used to make final judgments about borderline final grades. Make-up midterm exams are possible in extreme cases, but *make-up final exams are impossible*. ANY STUDENT WHO DOES NOT SHOW UP FOR THE FINAL EXAM WILL FAIL THE COURSE.

Attendance: Attendance is required. Students who complete all other course requirements but do not meet the attendance requirement will fail the course. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence. Every unexcused absence a student accumulates beyond the first one will lower that student's final course grade by one-third of a letter. If an emergency prevents you from attending one class meeting, it is not necessary to contact me until the next meeting; if you miss more than one class, email your explanation as soon as possible. Roll will be called at every class meeting. Students who arrive late are responsible for telling me to enter their names on the roll after class on the day they arrive late. Be prepared to document the reason for excused absences.

Class participation: Class participation is required, and is figured as ten percent of the final course grade. Every student is expected to make some contribution to class discussion every single time we meet. I will frequently call on students, and I will make a special point of calling on students who try to avoid talking. I will lecture as little as possible. Most of our meeting time will be devoted to discussion, during which students will work together to figure out how to apply to each new assigned text the approaches that worked for texts assigned earlier. TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES BEFORE ENTERING THE CLASSROOM! I will ask the dean to remove from the class roster any student who repeatedly disrupts class with electronic devices, tardiness, or talking out of turn.

Student Learning Objectives: After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
Read Chaucer's English well with the help of translator's notes
Write a coherent literary analysis of a tale, character, or other topic related to the *Tales*

Recognize and identify important features of the literary genres reflected in the *Tales*.
Recognize repeating patterns of allusion to the Bible and theology in the *Tales*
Bring knowledge of Chaucer's "sources and influences" to bear on the *Tales*
Bring relevant historical and cultural information to bear on the *Tales*

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information:
http://www.uno.edu/~stlf/policy%20Manual/judicial_code_pt2.htm

Additional Criteria for Grading and Grading Standards: Exams will be graded on a curve. Usually the resulting grading scale deviates somewhat, but not too dramatically, from the following:

- A 90-100% correct
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- D 60-69
- F under 60

Midterm reports and term papers will be evaluated not only in terms of how closely students adhere to detailed instructions for each in the course policies, but also in terms of how effective the reports and papers are as essays.

Accommodation for students with disabilities. It is university policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to
<http://www.ods.uno.edu>.

Statement on student conduct: All students are required to speak and otherwise behave in a manner that is respectful and that does not interfere with other students' ability to learn or the instructor's ability to teach.