

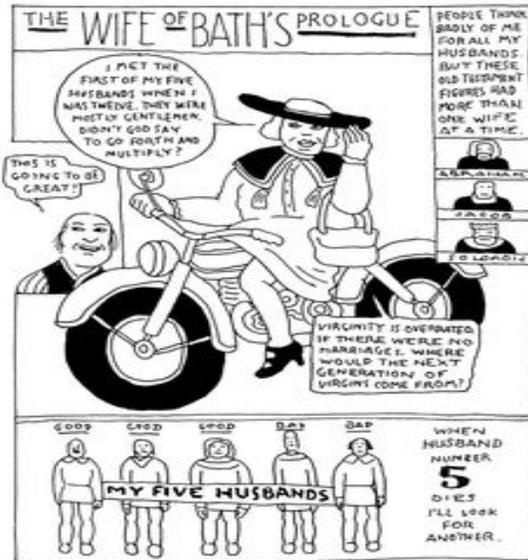
ENGLISH 4188-01W: (CANNIBALIZING) CHAUCER
Spring 2017 * M/W 3:30-4:45 * Pafford 308

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Office Hours: M 10:45-12:15; W 10:45-12:15 and 5-6; or by appointment



Course Description

As the sheer number of surviving manuscripts (eighty-three for the *Canterbury Tales* alone) and early printed editions of his work suggest, the late fourteenth-century poet Geoffrey Chaucer is one of the first poets to reach diverse and popular audiences in the newly emergent English vernacular. He is also among the first writers in a recognizably English tradition to be emulated widely and, indeed, almost immediately by other authors. In fact, many manuscripts and early printed works attributed to Chaucer we now know were written by his contemporaries or literary descendants in what are clear attempts to imitate, and in some instances even cannibalize, Chaucer's style. Over the course of our semester together, we will read a variety of "authentic" Chaucerian works—from short poems and dream visions, to select *Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Criseyde*—alongside some of their more significant impersonations or continuations by medieval and modern authors alike. Our goals in doing this are twofold. First, we will pay careful attention to the style and subject matter of Chaucer himself; considering, for example, how his manipulation of genre and his recasting of source materials destabilizes traditional representations of class, gender, and narrative authority. Second, we will explore how later Chaucerians evoke Chaucer's poetics to advance agendas of their own. At stake here are the questions of how we understand the Chaucerian tradition, and how perceptions of "Chaucer" and authorship continue to change.

Fair warning: we will be reading Chaucer's works in their original Middle English using volumes selected for their careful glossing and translation of particularly tricky words and passages. While I have no problem with you using translations to spot check your understanding toward the beginning of the semester, I do expect you to engage the Middle English during class

discussions and formal assignments alike. You should also be aware of the fact that Chaucer deals with some heavy subjects, including rape, anti-Semitism, and the harsh realities of war. If you need to take a break while reading about any of these subjects, that is perfectly okay, as is talking to someone—me, a UWG counselor or trusted friend—about why you find a particular topic especially difficult to process.

Course Objectives

- Students will become familiar with the career of a major figure in literature.
- Students will understand how that writer's work both embodies the literary tradition that precedes it and influences the literature that follows it.
- Students will appreciate the ways in which a writer's career and reputation are influenced by social, political, historical, and cultural forces.
- Students will gain an enhanced knowledge of how criticism shapes literary history.
- Students will demonstrate in both oral and written work a discipline-specific critical facility through convincing and well-supported analysis of related material.
- Students will demonstrate their command of academic English and of the tenets of sound composition by means of thesis-driven analytical prose.

Required Texts

Agbabi, Patience. *Telling Tales*. Canon Gate, 2015. (ISBN 9781782111573)

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales: A Selection*. 2nd ed. Ed. Robert Boenig and Andrew Taylor. Broadview, 2013. (ISBN 9781554811366)

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Troilus and Criseyde*. Ed. James M. Dean and Harriet Spiegel. Broadview, 2016. (ISBN 9781554810055)

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Dream Visions and Other Poems*. Ed. Kathryn L. Lynch. Norton, 2007. (ISBN 9780393925883)

Supplementary readings due will be available via CourseDen or online

You will also need to view the following movie, which is on reserve in the library and can be rented from the English Department as well (where there three copies that can be checked out for a three day period of time):

A Knight's Tale. Dir. Brian Helgeland. Perf. Heath Ledger and Paul Bettany. 2001.

[Streaming at Amazon too]

Required Work

Fuller descriptions of your written assignments and study guides for your exams will be posted to CourseDen.

- *Daily Participation* (15%): You are expected to not only do the assigned readings, but also to come to class prepared to discuss said readings. This does not mean that you have to have everything “figured out” ahead of time; questions and clarifications are perfectly reasonable ways to contribute to class discussions, though you need to make an effort to share your opinions and insights too if you want higher than a “C” in this component of your grade. Challenge yourself to talk at least once a week if not once a class. Bringing both the texts we'll be discussing and the notes you took while reading those texts to class is a good starting point for being prepared for class discussions. If I get the sense that you are not reading, I will incorporate reading quizzes into this component of your

grade. I will post your participation grade twice: around midterm and at the end of the semester.

- *Middle English Recitation* (5%): You will be responsible for preparing and reading a passage of around 25-30 lines from one of the texts we read in Middle English. You can either record yourself reading or come to read during my office hours, whichever is easiest and most comfortable for you. We will discuss the variety of online resources available to assist you in this endeavor during the first few weeks of class, and will also practice reading Middle English aloud together at several points during the semester.
- *Analytical Paper* (15%): a 3 to 4 page paper that closely analyzes a short passage from one of the Chaucerian texts that we have read as a class in order to offer a specific interpretation of said passage.
- *Adapting Chaucer Pitch* (15%): a 3 to 4 page “pitch” in which you describe, in detail, a Chaucerian adaptation you would like to see made. These adaptations can utilize any source materials and modes/media you see fit.
- *Term Paper* (30%): a 6 to 7 page research paper about a well-constructed subject related to the course topic and chosen in consultation with me. As part of this assignment, you will submit a proposal and annotated bibliography for your paper, which is worth 5% of the overall grade.
- *Canonizing Chaucer Presentation* (10%): Working in groups, you will investigate the history of scholarly criticism on one of the Chaucerian texts we are reading for class. You will summarize your findings for your peers and use the information you have discovered to collectively start our class discussion on that particular class by way of a twenty to twenty-five minute presentation.
- *Final Exam* (10%): a writing intensive exam covering class readings, discussions, and lectures.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class daily and be on time. I take roll by asking the class a specific “attendance question”; if you show up after I am done with roll you will be considered late. You may miss three classes with no questions asked. Absences four and five will result in your final grade dropping by two percentage points. Six or more absences will result in you not passing this class. Three late arrivals count as one absence. Leaving class early without permission also counts as an absence, as does showing up more than twenty-five minutes late. If you are asked to leave class for any reason, that too will count as an absence. Should you miss a class at any point in the semester, it is your responsibility to talk to your peers to figure out what you missed. In-class work cannot be made up except for cases of documented emergency and missing multiple in-class discussions will negatively impact your participation grade.

Deadlines and Submitting Assignments

All of your work is due on the days and times indicated by the schedule below. You will submit your work electronically via CourseDen (or email if there happens to be server trouble). Your grade will drop by two grade scales (four points) for every day that it is late, including weekends, and I will not accept work that is over a week late. If you are going to be absent the day that something is due, it remains your responsibility to make sure that your work is turned in on time. Failure to do so will result in your grade dropping. If you are having trouble with an assignment, come and talk to me **well ahead** of that assignment’s due date; I do not grant last minute extensions for assignments. It is your responsibility to regularly back up your work and to

ensure that the submitted product is formatted correctly. “My computer ate my file” and “I thought I submitted that file” are not accepted excuses for late work, so I strongly suggest you save your work to a USB drive regularly (backing your work up on Google Drive or another cloud service might also be advisable) and double check that ALL of your submissions to CourseDen go through as planned. If you have questions or concerns about CourseDen, you should contact the Distance Learning office (<http://uwgonline.westga.edu/>).

Grading and Revision Policies

Grades are based on student performance on each assignment. Simply turning in every assignment does not guarantee that you will receive the grade you want on those assignments, nor does earning a “good” grade on one assignment guarantee that you will earn a similar grade on the next assignment. The grading scale and standards I use are detailed in the “Grading Scale and Guidelines for Formal Assignments” document on CourseDen. I do not offer extra credit for this class. I do accept revisions of analytical papers and/or pitches **if you meet with me** to discuss your plans for revision **within a week** of me handing the graded paper back to you. You should come to this meeting with your **revision plan/goals typed up or written out**. Revised papers do not necessarily earn higher grades, but I do guarantee that your grade will not drop in any way should you decide to attempt a revision. If you are revising a paper that was penalized for plagiarism, your old grade and your new grade will be averaged to determine the final grade that you will receive.

University Policies and Student Rights/Responsibilities

Please carefully review the following Common Language for all university course syllabi: http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf. It contains important material pertaining to university policies and responsibilities. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Academic Honesty

The act of plagiarism—claiming someone else’s ideas, language, images, or other original materials as your own without giving full credit to your source—is a serious offense. As members of an academic community, it is important that we engage in responsible and honest communication with one another. Plagiarism, whether accidental or intentional, will result in a failing grade for assignment and will, as a result, negatively impact your overall grade. Repeat offenders will fail the course and might be subjected to additional action by the University.

If you are unclear about how to cite a source, ask me **before** you turn your work in. Sources you should consult before talking to me include:

- The department's website: <http://www.westga.edu/%7Eengdept/Plagiarism/index.html>
- The Bedford/St. Martin student site:
http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/rewriting2e/#t_526483
- The research and citation section of Purdue’s online writing lab:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

Submitting someone else's work as your own, resubmitting your own work done for another class, or collaborating with peers on individual assignments are also forms of academic dishonesty that will result in failing grades for the assignment in question.

Accessibility Services

UWG adheres to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that accommodations be made to make programs accessible for people with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability, please make sure to register at the Accessibility Services Office and provide me with a copy of your Accommodation Request as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services Office is located at 123 Row Hall. You may call them at 678-839-6428 or visit their website at <http://www.westga.edu/counseling/4486.php>.

Classroom Environment

Since everyone is expected to participate in class, it is important that you all feel comfortable doing so. Some of the content we will be discussing involves topics or perspectives with which you might not agree or feel wholly comfortable, and that is okay. Differing viewpoints are welcome in class discussions; however, disrespectful comments against specific individuals or groups will not be tolerated under any circumstances. In the event that such a statement is made, the speaker will be asked to leave class immediately and will be marked absent for the day. Disagreeing with someone is one thing, disrespecting or attacking him or her is another—do not do it. On a related note, it is disrespectful to both me and your fellow classmates to let your cell phones ring during our time together, so please turn off your phones before class. Other portable electronics should, likewise, be turned off during class unless you are given permission to use them for a specific purpose. If I see you text messaging, emailing, checking facebook, or doing work for another class, I will ask you to leave and mark you as absent.

Additional Help

I am happy to meet with you outside of class to discuss Homework due, your progress on projects, or any other questions/concerns you might have. I will be in my office during the office hours listed at the top of this syllabus. (On the occasion that I need to reschedule office hours, you will be given as much advanced notice about these changes as possible.) If you are unable to come to office hours, let me know and we'll figure out another time to meet that is convenient for us both. I am also happy to answer specific questions over email and will do so as quickly as I can. That said, please don't panic if you don't hear from me right away, especially if you send your email at, say, midnight. If, however, I haven't responded in 24 hours, feel free to send a follow up email.

The University Writing Center is another excellent resource that I encourage you to take advantage of as all writing benefits from multiple sets of eyes; indeed, professional writers workshop their pieces all of the time. You may go to the Writing Center at any stage in your writing process. For more information or to make an appointment, call 678-839-6513, visit TLC 1201, or email writing@westga.edu.

UWG Cares

College can sometimes feel stressful. Please know that everyone at UWG is committed to supporting you to the best of our abilities; we've been in your shoes. If at any point during the semester you or someone you know starts to feel overwhelmed, I'd encourage you to call the Counseling Center (it's free and anything you discuss can remain confidential) at 678-839-6428. If you need me to help you find a particular support service or walk with you to an office, I am

happy to do that; you need to know, however, that I am legally obligated to report any incident of sexual assault. If you are worried about someone who does not seem to want to ask for help, visit <http://www.westga.edu/uwgcares/> to file an anonymous report on that person. In case of emergency, don't be afraid to call national help lines, like the national suicide prevention lifeline at 800-273-8255 or the national sexual assault hotline at 800-656-4673.

Schedule of Homework due and Assignments (due the date on which they are listed)

This syllabus is a general plan for the course and might be modified as the semester progresses to meet course objectives or address the needs of the class. Most (if not all) of the changes made will be in consultation with the class as a whole. I will announce any changes made in class before sending out a revised syllabus. It is your responsibility to check CourseDen and your email regularly to ensure you are up to date on all class announcements, etc.

Week One: Introductions

Jan. 9	Historical overview and course expectations. <i>Email me your top three choice for Canonizing Chaucer by midnight.</i>
Jan. 11	“Meeting” Chaucer. <i>Homework due:</i> Scanlon, “Geoffrey Chaucer” and Dinshaw, “New Approaches” (e-reserve); watch <i>A Knight’s Tale</i> . Drop period with refund ends at 4pm.

Week Two: A Pilgrim There Was

Jan. 16	MLK Day: No class.
Jan. 18	Starting a journey. <i>Homework due:</i> General Prologue to <i>CT</i> ; and Lerer, “ <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> ” (e-reserve)

Week Three: A “Quite-ing” Contest

Jan. 23	<i>Canonizing Chaucer Presentation #1</i> <i>Homework due:</i> The Knight’s Tale
Jan. 25	<i>Homework due:</i> The Miller’s Prologue and Tale and the Reeve’s Prologue and Tale

Week Four: Nay or Yay?

Jan. 30	<i>Canonizing Chaucer Presentation #2</i> <i>Homework due:</i> The Clerk’s Prologue and Tale
Feb. 1	<i>Homework due:</i> The Merchant’s Prologue and Tale

Week Five: Sovereignty Tested

Feb. 6	<i>Canonizing Chaucer Presentation #3</i> <i>Homework due:</i> The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale
Feb. 8	<i>Homework due:</i> The Franklin’s Prologue and Tale

Week Six: The Moral of the Story Is...

Feb. 13	<i>Homework due:</i> The Friar’s Prologue and Tale and the Summoner’s Prologue and Tale
Feb. 15	<i>Homework due:</i> The Pardoner’s Prologue and Tale and the Prioress’s Prologue and Tale <i>Analytical Paper due by noon tomorrow (2/16)</i>

Week Seven: Tales Retold

Feb. 20	Medieval continuations/adaptations of the <i>Canterbury Tales</i> <i>Homework due:</i> Lydgate's Prologue to <i>The Siege of Thebes</i> (http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/bowers-canterbury-tales-fifteenth-century-prologue-siege-of-thebes) and The Ploughman's Tale (http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/bowers-canterbury-tales-fifteenth-century-ploughmans-tale)
Feb. 22	Modern continuations/adaptations of the <i>Canterbury Tales</i> <i>Homework due:</i> Agbabi, "Prologue," "Emily," "The Kiss," "Tit for Tat," "What Do Women Like Bes?," "The Devil in Cardiff," "Arse Dramatica," "I Go Back to May 1967," "That Beatin' Rhythm," "Makar," "Profit," "Sharps an Flats" and "Back Track (Grime Mix)"

Week Eight: To Troy

Feb. 27	Meeting our lovers. <i>Homework due:</i> <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i> , Book One and Lambert, "Telling the Story" (e-reserve)
Mar. 1	<i>Homework due:</i> <i>Troilus</i> , Book Two through line 1246. <i>Drop period with "W" ends at 4 p.m. tomorrow.</i>

Week Nine: Joy

Mar. 6	<i>Homework due:</i> <i>Troilus</i> , finish Book Two and Book Three through line 679.
Mar. 8	<i>Homework due:</i> <i>Troilus</i> , finish Book Three

Week Ten: Sorrow

Mar. 13	<i>Homework due:</i> <i>Troilus</i> , Book Four
Mar. 15	<i>Canonizing Chaucer Presentation #4</i> <i>Homework due:</i> <i>Troilus</i> , Book Five <i>Last day to complete Middle English recitations.</i>

Week Eleven: Break

Mar. 20	No class: Spring Break.
Mar. 22	No class: Spring Break.

Week Twelve: Joy and Sorrow Take Two

Mar. 27	Medieval continuations/adaptations of <i>Troilus</i> . <i>Homework due:</i> Henryson, <i>The Testament of Cresseid</i> (back of your Broadview edition)
Mar. 29	Modern continuations/adaptations of <i>Troilus</i> . <i>Homework due:</i> excerpt from Greenlaw, <i>A Double Sorrow</i> (e-reserve) <i>Adaptation Pitches due by noon tomorrow (3/30).</i>

Week Thirteen: Divinely Demanded Do-Over

Apr. 3	"Good" women speak. <i>Homework due:</i> <i>Legend of Good Women</i> , "Prologue" through "The Legend of Dido" and Hansen, "The Feminization of Men" (back of your Norton Edition)
Apr. 5	<i>Canonizing Chaucer Presentation #5</i> <i>Homework due:</i> finish <i>Legend of Good Women</i>

Week Fourteen: Sleeping to Dream

Apr. 10	Canonizing Chaucer Presentation #6 Human encounters. <i>Homework due: Book of the Duchess; and Williams, "Dream Visions" (e-reserve)</i>
Apr. 12	Animal encounters. <i>Homework due: Parliament of Fowls</i> Proposals and Annotated Bibliographies due by noon tomorrow (4/13)

Week Fifteen: Workshopping Papers

Apr. 17	Incorporating Sources Workshop.
Apr. 19	Building an Argument Workshop.

Week Fifteen: Workshopping Papers

Apr. 24	TBD by class.
Apr. 26	Peer review of term papers—minimum of five pages. Papers due by Friday (4/28) at noon.

Week Sixteen: Conclusions

May 1	Course evaluations and final exam review. Take home exam due by 5pm on Friday (5/5).
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