

Spring 2005
English 40403
TR 2-3:20 pm
137 Tucker Technology
Center

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Office Hours: MW 2-4

**ENGLISH 40403
CHAUCER**

The double sorrow of Troilus for to tell,
That was the King Priam's son of Troy,
In loving, how his adventures fell
From woe to well, and after out of joy,
My purpose is, before I part from you.

So begins Geoffrey Chaucer's masterful poem *Troilus and Criseyde*, a story of passion, lust and betrayal set in the turbulent age of the Trojan War. Though many students of British Literature are very familiar with Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, few know of the *Troilus*, a text perhaps more popular among Chaucer's contemporaries than his other works. In this course, we will focus mainly on the *Troilus*, but also read some of Chaucer's important earlier poems, *The Book of the Duchess*, *The House of Fame*, and *The Legend of Good Women*, texts that deal with the themes of death, fame, gender, and love.

We will also study the political, social, and cultural climate of Later Medieval England and examine how Chaucer reflects and comments upon the ideas and values of this tumultuous era of peasant rebellion, devastating plague, and political intrigue. Secondary material used will include studies in sources and analogues to Chaucer's work and recent critical approaches to the poems. The texts will be read in the original Middle English, so some experience with Middle English is expected, but not required. Course work will include recitation and translation of Middle English, several short response papers, and a longer research paper.

Course Objectives:

1. An understanding of the chronological development of Geoffrey Chaucer as poet and historical figure, and his experiments with genre, characterization, theme, imagery, sound, and meter, as well as his unique interpretations of different popular forms of poetry from the Continent.
2. Background knowledge of the political, social, and cultural climate of Later Medieval England, which Chaucer reflects and comments upon in his works, as well as knowledge of the Continental and Classical sources that inspired and influenced much of his work.
3. Familiarity with a variety of the latest critical approaches and scholarly interpretations of Chaucer's works.
4. A firm grasp of Middle English, including the ability to competently translate into Modern English, and the confidence to read Middle English aloud with correct pronunciation.

Required Texts:

The Riverside Chaucer. ed. Larry Benson, et al. Oxford Paperbacks, 1988.

A Companion to Chaucer. ed. Peter Brown. Blackwell, 2002.

To help with Middle English pronunciation and comprehension, all students are required to purchase—as soon as possible—a recording of one of Chaucer’s poems from The Chaucer Studio. This will also help you with the graded assignment to recite and translate a portion from a Chaucer text. Order forms are available on the Chaucer Studio website: <http://english.byu.edu/chaucer/>.

Acronyms commonly used by scholars to refer to the texts we will be studying are:

BD “Book of the Duchess”

HF “House of Fame”

PF “Parliament of Fowls”

LGW “Legend of Good Women”

TC “Troilus and Criseyde”

Required Course Work:

Reading: Because this is an upper-level, small, seminar-style course, well-informed discussion, scholarly debate, and eager exploration of ideas will be at its heart. Students will be expected to be prepared with their readings (meaning a close, careful study of the texts assigned) and ready to face complex and difficult questions for discussion. Students are strongly encouraged to present their own questions and ideas for discussion. I will also occasionally assign translations and questions for homework to encourage our discussions and work in the class.

Class participation is essential and 20% of your grade!!! Your class participation grade includes attendance and homework, as well as your regular contribution to class discussions.

Recitation: Each student will be required, with the aid of The Chaucer Studio tape he/she purchases, to recite from memorization 20 lines from one of Chaucer’s poems we will cover in class. The student will meet with me in my office, recite the lines with correct pronunciation, and verbally translate the lines recited.

Responses to Criticism: Three response essays will be assigned during the semester. The purpose of the response essays will be for you to explore secondary criticism written about one of Chaucer’s texts. You will summarize and respond to the secondary work and in the process add your own insights on the text being analyzed.

Please use the following guidelines in preparing your essay: Use a word processor to type up your paper; double-space the lines, using one side of the page; leave 1” left and right margins; put page numbers in the upper right-hand corners (except the first page which

should not be numbered); in the upper right-hand corner of the first page include your name, course and section number, my name, essay number, and date. Your secondary source and the literary text must be properly referenced with a works cited page and in-text citations using correct MLA style. Each essay should be no less than 3 full pages and no longer than 4 full pages.

Essays received that do not follow these requirements will be returned ungraded. To receive a grade, the returned essay must be revised and resubmitted within one week. Essays should always be turned in on time. An essay received late will be marked down a grade, including essays returned for format revision.

Research Paper: In place of a final exam, you will write a 10 to 15-page research paper on a variety of topics. You may further explore a topic from one of your earlier response essays, a topic we cover in our readings from *A Companion to Chaucer*, or some connection between Chaucer's life or the medieval world and one of Chaucer's texts. As for the structure of your essay, you will need to examine the secondary criticism written about the text and Chaucer to review what has been said before. You may discuss your support or refutation of the various arguments found in this secondary criticism. After giving this survey, you will then need to give your own interpretation by using examples from Chaucer's text. *Further details about this assignment will be given out later in the semester.*

Course Grade Breakdown:

Class participation, attendance & homework	20%
Recitation	10%
Response essays (3 @ 15 %)	45%
Research Paper	25%

Policies:

Attendance: Three absences ONLY are allowed, excused or unexcused, so save them until you need them. *Exceptions will be made only if you can produce a doctor's note or other formal documentation.* Your class participation grade will be reduced by a half grade for each additional absence (e.g. from A to B+). **Three weeks (6 classes) of unexcused absences constitute grounds for automatic failure of the course.**

Much of the material we cover in the classroom is not found in your books, and often the class conversation will lead us in other directions. For these reasons, daily attendance is important and hence my strict attendance policy. But if you have difficulty with this additional policy I have set out, perhaps this course will not suit your needs.

If you miss a class, you are still responsible for the homework that was due for that class; likewise, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate and find out what homework is due for the next class.

Late work: All assigned work should be turned in on time. Any assignments received late will be marked down by a half grade for each calendar day that they are late (e.g. from A to B+), unless a) the student has an official university absence and b) I have agreed to late submission *in advance of the due date*.

Academic Dishonesty: Refer to Page 51 of the *TCU Undergraduate Studies Bulletin*. The following examples apply specifically to academic misconduct in composition courses:

Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore.

Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

Fabrication and falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.

Multiple Submission: The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.

Complicity in academic misconduct: Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

All cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Chair of the English Department. Sanctions imposed for cases of academic misconduct range from zero credit for the assignment to expulsion from the University.

Additional Resources:

The Writing Center

The William L. Adams Center for Writing is an academic service available to all TCU students. Writing specialists and peer tutors are available for one-on-one tutorials from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in Room 244 of the Rickel Academic Wing in the University Recreation Center. Although walk-ins are welcome, students are encouraged to make an appointment by calling (817) 257-7221. Students can also visit the Center for Writing annex in the Information Commons area of the library Monday through Friday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Sunday through Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Please call (817) 257-6520 for an appointment. Online tutorials are also available. Visit the Center for Writing web site at <http://www.wrt.tcu.edu/> for further information.

ADA

TCU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. The University shall provide reasonable accommodations for each eligible student who a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, b) has a record or history of such an impairment, or c) is regarded as having such an impairment. Eligible students should contact the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities.

(TCU Undergraduate Studies Bulletin, Pg. 28)

Course Schedule

The following schedule is subject to change with advance notice, and it will sometimes be supplemented with additional readings from secondary sources. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for the homework due for that class; likewise, you are responsible for contacting a classmate (not me) to get notes and find out what work will be due for the next class.

The assignments listed below are due on the day indicated. Assignments for Chaucer's texts refer to line numbers. The readings from *A Companion to Chaucer* will usually relate directly to the content of our Chaucer reading, but in some instances these articles will introduce us to more general concerns in Chaucer's time.

January

- T 18** Introduction to Chaucer's Late Medieval England.
- R 20** Introduction to Chaucer's Late Medieval England. *Companion*, "Social Structures" Swanson, 397-411; "Crisis and Dissent" Blamires, 133-146.
- T 25** Introduction to Middle English. *Companion*, "Language" Burnley, 235-248. Handout on Middle English and Harvard Chaucer online tutorial (<http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/pronunciation>)
- R 27** Introduction to a Manuscript culture. *Companion*, "Texts" Machan, 428-441

February

- T 1** "The Book of the Duchess" *Riverside Chaucer*, Introduction and lines 1-386. *Companion* "France" Hanley, 149-164
- R 3** "The Book of the Duchess" *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 387-709. *Companion* "Games" Andrew, 167-178.
- T 8** "The Book of the Duchess" *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 710-1041. *Companion* "Genre" Eckhardt, 180-192.
- R 10** "The Book of the Duchess" *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 1042-1334 (end). *Companion* "Geography and Travel" Westrem, 195-214.
- T 15** "The House of Fame" *Riverside Chaucer*, Introduction and lines 1-508 (Book I). *Companion* "Other Thought-worlds" Fein, 332-347.

- R 17** “The House of Fame” *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 509-1090 (Book II).
Companion “Science” Taavitsainen, 378-393.
- T 22** “The House of Fame” *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 1091-1867 (Book III).
Companion “Narrative” Edwards, 312-330.
- R 24** “The House of Fame” *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 1868-2158 (end Book III).
Companion “Afterlife” Collette, 8-20.

Friday, February 25th—Response Essay # 1 (on BD or HF) due by 1:00 pm. You may hand deliver it to my office or email it to me as an attachment.

March

- T 1** “The Parliament of Fowls” *Riverside Chaucer*, Introduction and lines 1-301. *Companion* “Love” Phillips, 281-294.
Sign up for Recitation.
- R 3** “The Parliament of Fowls” *Riverside Chaucer*, lines 302-699 (end).
Companion “Life Histories” Dillon, 251-263.
Sign up for Recitation.

Recitations of your chosen passages will be scheduled for the week of March 7-11.

- T 8** “The Legend of Good Women” *Riverside Chaucer*, Introduction and the “F-Prologue”--Text F (lefthand column) lines 1-579. *Companion* “Authority” Galloway, 23-36.
- R 10** “The Legend of Good Women” *Riverside Chaucer*, the “G-Prologue”—Text G (righthand column) lines 1-545. *Companion*, “Contemporary English Writers” Simpson, 114-129.
- T 15** **Spring Break**
- R 17** **Spring Break**
- T 22** “The Legend of Good Women” *Riverside Chaucer*, Legends of Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, Hypsipyle and Medea, and Lucrece, lines 580-1885. *Companion* “Modes of Representation” Wheatley, 296-310.
- R 24** “The Legend of Good Women” *Riverside Chaucer*, Legends of Ariadne, Philomela, Phyllis, and Hypermnestra, lines 1886-2723.
Companion “Women” Hallett, 480-493.

Friday, March 25th—Response Essay # 2 (on PF or LGW) due by 1:00 pm. You may hand deliver it to my office or email it to me as an attachment.

T 29 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Introduction and Book I, lines 1-560. *Companion* “Visualizing” Stanbury, 459-477.

R 31 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book I, lines 561-1092. *Companion* “Italy” Wallace, 218-232.

April

T 5 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book II, lines 1-932. *Companion* “Chivalry” Brewer, 58-72.

R 7 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book II, lines 933-1757. *Companion* “Translation” Ellis, 443-456.

T 12 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book III, lines 1-966. *Companion* “Comedy” Kendrick, 90-111.

R 14 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book III, lines 967-1820. *Companion* “Style” Plummer, 414-426.

Friday, April 15th—Response Essay # 3 (on TC) due by 1:00 pm. You may hand deliver it to my office or email it to me as an attachment.

T 19 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book IV, lines 1-910. *Companion* “Pagan Survivals” Fyler, 349-357.

R 21 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book IV, lines 911-1701. *Companion* “London” Hanrahan, 266-277.

T 26 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book V, lines 1-945. *Companion* “Christian Ideologies” Watson, 75-87.

R 28 “Troilus and Criseyde” *Riverside Chaucer*, Book V, lines 945-1869. *Companion* “Personal Identity” Staley, 360-376.

May

T 3 Last day of class

The Final Research Paper is due in my office (309D Reed Hall) by 5:30 pm on Tuesday, May 10th. You may hand deliver your paper or attach it to an email. You may, of course, hand your paper in to me before this date too.