

**ENG 210-16 Approaches to Literature:
King Arthur & the Middle Ages
Summer Session II 2009**
MTWTh 10:30-1:15 Murphy 103
Missouri Western State University
Dept. of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism

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Required Texts:

- Damrosch, Baswell, and Schotter, Eds. *The Longman Anthology of British Literature, Volume 1A: The Middle Ages*. (3rd Edition). NY: Longman, 2006. ISBN 0-321-33391-8 (“The green edition”)
- Aristotle. *Poetics*. Translated by Malcolm Heath. NY: Penguin Books. ISBN: 0-140-44636-2

Reading Assignments: Make sure you have read assigned sections of the textbook *before coming to class* on the day readings are listed. Come to class prepared to submit formal discussion questions and be prepared to answer both formal and informal questions about the reading. Be prepared to make informed comments based on the assigned reading.

Films: Typically, this class views episodes of Simon Schama’s *History of Britain* (The History Channel), and the films *The Thirteenth Warrior* (1999) and *King Arthur* (2004).

About ENG 210: Approaches to Literature

Objectives and Means: Upon completion of English 210. A student should be able to (1) Recognize the major characteristics of literary genres; (2) Discuss literature, orally and in writing, with assurance; (3) Appreciate literary works which are encountered; (4) Understand the different ways in which literary theme may be treated in literature. To reach these goals, the student is expected to: (1) Read poetry, prose fiction, and drama; (2) Investigate various methods of approaching and understanding literature; (3) Write papers, including themes and essay examinations; (4) Read a variety of literary works in which a chosen theme is dominant.

About This Section of English 210:

This section of English 210 will provide an introduction to the literature, language, and historical literary settings of Medieval England. There will be significant emphasis on heroic verse and the Arthurian Tradition in poems, *lais*, and tales. Medieval readings are chronological, beginning with the Old English poem *Beowulf* (in translation) and ending with Chaucer’s Arthurian “Wife of Bath’s Tale.” Students will build their critical reading skills by studying and discussing Aristotle’s *Poetics*, noting how the patterns laid forth in classical thought inform literary works of the Middle Ages. In addition, the course will then explore implications of the Arthurian tradition in contemporary treatments of Medieval and Arthurian tales in film and the media.

Attendance:

Official MWSU 100-200-level course attendance policy: In order to improve student learning as well as to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level and 200-level courses.

You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided you give prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event.

All other absences will be deemed unexcused. The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed for this class before the midterm report is two (2). Thus, when you have three (3) unexcused absences you will be reported to the Registrar’s Office, who will automatically withdraw you from this class. The Financial Aid Office will reduce financial aid as appropriate.

Students who consult with me *well in advance* (48 hours) of known *legitimate* conflicts or hardship will be given consideration on a case-by-case basis. Serious efforts to attend and to complete the work for this class will be prioritized, especially in cases of earnest dedication and hard work. You are advised to manage your allotted absences wisely in case of real illness or emergencies. Note: Weddings and vacation trips do *not* constitute “conflicts, hardships, or emergencies.”

The maximum number of absences allowed for this class is two (2) unexcused absences. Students who exceed two unexcused absences in this course will receive a failing grade (as per university policy, students who miss two class meetings *before midterm* will receive an “FA” and be automatically dropped from the course).

If you miss class, consult your syllabus for daily reading. Check the “O” drive for any materials that may have been added in your absence. Get notes and assignments from a classmate. There are no make-up exams or make-up quiz dates. Coursework, exams, and deadlines missed will result in a score of Zero.

Success in ENG 210: King Arthur and the Middle Ages: Sophomore level courses are conducted under the assumption that students are well-versed in the conventions of college classrooms and academic environments:

Class Meetings:

- Power down or silence *ALL* electronic communication/texting devices (cell phones, ipods, iphones, blackberries, etc.).
- Distracting classmates or the instructor with a texting / electronic device does constitute *disruptive behavior* and will result in the student being asked to *leave class* (and be counted absent).
- Come to class prepared: keep up with daily reading and writing assignments.
- Be courteous/helpful to disabled students (i.e., if a wheelchair is blocked, get up and *move* something ☺)
- Arrive on time and remain in class for the entire period. Time your “comfort breaks” before and after class.
- Take notes. Ask questions. Form a study group.
- Arrive on time for exams and re-check your answers before turning in your test.
- Participate in class discussion and activities.

Academic Advantage:

- Familiarize yourself with the glossaries, indexes, and other helpful tools provided in the textbooks.
- Re-read difficult material. I expect even the most experienced readers to re-read unfamiliar and difficult texts.
- Meet deadlines. Turn in discussion questions, in-class written responses, and essays *on time*.
- Remain engaged with the materials for the entire class period.
- Develop good academic habits; it will pay off.

Contacting the Instructor:

If you are experiencing hardships or unusual circumstances please phone or talk with me privately during Office Hours.

Restrict e-mail communication to class topics, assignments, and early drafts of written assignments (paste text into email body; please do NOT send attachments).

Email policy: Electronic communications among students and instructors shall remain mature, polite, and appropriate to the context of the class and the college setting. “Flaming” or harassing instructors or classmates in electronic mail or other forums of messaging will not be tolerated. Issues and concerns of a sensitive nature should be dealt with *person-to-person*, not in email, as state institutions have archival jurisdiction over electronically transmitted messages (translation: email is not actually “private”). Be courteous. Be thoughtful. Be excellent.

Disabilities: Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact the MWSU Special Needs Office as soon as possible so that we can discuss alternative ways to satisfy class requirements such as testing, writing, seating accommodations, interpreting for the deaf, etc.

Written Work:

Papers will be written in MLA format. Use 1" margins all around, and 12-point, New Times Roman typeface if at all possible. Double space and place page numbers in the upper-right corner on all but the first page:

GRADED COURSE WORK

20% Exam #1

20% Exam #2 Midterm

30% Exam #3 Final Exam.

10% Short Paper

20% Attendance and In-Class Participation (discussion, discussion questions; quizzes, in-class exercises, etc.)

100% Total Grade

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE***SUMMER SESSION II: JUNE-JULY 2009**

WEEK I		
JUNE		
29	M	Introduction; syllabus; policies; Video— “Beginnings” Simon Schama’s <i>History of Britain</i> series.
30	T	“The Middle Ages” <i>Longman</i> 3-26. Film: <i>Birth of a Language</i>
JULY		
1	W	“Before the Norman Conquest”; <i>Beowulf</i> “I.Grendel” <i>Longman</i> 27-51
2	TH	<i>Beowulf</i> “II. Grendel’s Mother;” “III. “The Dragon” <i>Longman</i> 51-92
WEEK II		
6	M	<i>Beowulf</i> “II. Grendel’s Mother;” “III. “The Dragon” <i>Longman</i> 51-92
7	T	Exam #1 ; Film <i>13th Warrior</i> (1999) (106 mins)
8	W	Aristotle <i>Poetics</i> 3-25
9	TH	Aristotle <i>Poetics</i> (3-48) “The Dream of the Rood” <i>Longman</i> 115-119; <i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i> (excerpt) <i>Longman</i> 134-135;
WEEK III		
13	M	“The Wanderer” <i>Longman</i> 153-156; “Wulf and Eadwacer” & “The Wife’s Lament” <i>Longman</i> 156-158 Video— <i>Conquest!</i> (Schama series—Hastings 1066 & Domesday Book)
14	T	Exam #2: Midterm ; Arthurian Myth in the History of Britain <i>Longman</i> 163-164; Geoffrey of Monmouth (from <i>History of the Kings of Britain</i>) 164-175; Gerald of Wales (from <i>The Instruction of Princes</i>) 175-177; Video—Terry Jones’ <i>Medieval Lives</i> “The Knight”
15	W	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> 200-258; Film: Arthurian Legends & Legacy <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> ; Assign Short Paper
16	TH	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> 200-258; Marie de France “Prologue,” “Lanval” <i>Longman</i> 181-198 Terry Jones’ <i>Medieval Lives</i> “The Damsel”
WEEK IV		
20	M	Sir Thomas Malory <i>Morte D’Arthur</i> 259-289; Film: Arthurian Legends & Legacy <i>Malory’s Morte D’Arthur</i> ;
21	T	Short Paper Due ; Film: <i>King Arthur</i> (126 mins)
22	W	Geoffrey Chaucer: The Wife of Bath’s Prologue & Tale 375-403
23	TH	Exam #3 FINAL EXAM

*Schedule may change in response to semester needs and events