

Fall 2011 ♦ ENGL/LING 449/549 (#40748, 40749, 40750)

Th 4:00-6:30 ♦ HUM 428

**Dr. Obermeier**

**Middle English Dialects**

Office Hours: M and Th 10-12 in HUM 269; and by Appointment

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### Required Texts

Burrow, J.A., and Thorlac Turville-Petre. *A Book of Middle English*. Blackwell, 2005 (BT).

Class website: <http://www.unm.edu/~aobermei/Eng449549/index449549.html> (CWP).

eReserves: link is on class web page. Password: Translatio (eR).

Obermeier, Anita, and Gregory Castle. *Guide to Style*. 2011. On class web page

### Recommended Texts for Medieval Studies Students

Mossé, Ferdinand. *A Handbook of Middle English*. Johns Hopkins, 1991.

### Course Requirements

2 Ungraded Exercises

2 Graded Exercises

Formal Translation Project

In-class Midterm

worth 10%

worth 35%

worth 15%

In-class Final	worth 20%
Class Participation	worth 20 %

Grading is done on a standard 0-100 scale. For grading rubrics and scale, see class web page.

### Tentative Syllabus

NOTE: When preparing the texts in *BT*, I suggest the following procedure. Read first for comprehension, using the glossary. Read again, aloud, for sound and/or listen to available audio files. Read the headnotes carefully. Note unusual or significant morphological forms (inflections), sounds, and lexical items in the text. Bring questions about them to class.

- Th 8.25      Introduction to the Course and Video Presentation: *Story of English* and *English Goes Underground*. Introduction to the study of Middle English language.
- Th 9.1        Read *BT* chapters 1-3 (3-18) and the “Old to Middle English Handout” (eR). Translate *The Peterborough Chronicle* 1137 (*BT* 74-80). If you feel weak in grammar and sentence structure, review “Parts of the Sentence” and “Parts of Speech” (CWP).
- F 9.2        **Last day to add courses or change sections.**
- Th 9.8        Read *BT* chapter 4 (19-37), chapter 5 in Moore and Marquardt (eR), and *Brut* (*BT* 96-105). Translate lines 78-173. Audio file on CWP. **Ungraded take-home exercise due**: phonetic transcription of a PDE passage.
- F 9.9        **Last day to drop a course without a grade.**
- Th 9.15      Read *BT* chapter 5 (38-55), chapter 6 in Moore and Marquardt (eR). Translate *Ancrene Wisse* (*BT* 106-11).
- F 9.16      **Last day to change grading options.**
- Th 9.22      Review grammar of previous weeks. Translate *The Owl and the Nightingale* lines 140-292 (*BT* 81-89). **Ungraded take-home exercise due**: phonetic transcription of ME passage.
- Th 9.29      Read *BT* chapters 6-7 (56-64). Read Introduction to *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (eR). Read *Sir Orfeo* (*BT* 112-31). Audio file on eR. Translate lines 435-600. **Midterm Exam Prep.**
- Th 10.6      **Midterm Exam.** Blue books are optional, but some form of paper is required. Read *The Cloud of Unknowing* (*BT* 132-40). Concentrate on the fifth and sixth chapter (139-40).
- Th 10.13     Fall Break.
- Th 10.20     Read *Piers Plowman* (*BT* 141-60). Translate 7b, lines 1-155. Review *BT* 6.3. **Graded take-home exercise due**: guided identification of dialect passages.

- Th 10.27 Translate *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* lines 181-342 (BT 182-192). Audio file on eR.
- F 10.28 **Phase 1 of Formal Translation Project due.**
- Th 11.3 Read John Trevisa: *Dialogue between a Lord and Clerk* (BT 235-42). Chapter 7 in Moore and Marquardt (eR).
- Th 11.10 Read John Gower: *Confessio Amantis* (BT 243-54). Audio files on eR.
- F 11.11 **Phase 2 of Formal Translation Project due.**  
**Last day to drop a course without approval of college dean.**
- Th 11.17 Read *The York Play of the Crucifixion* (BT 272-82). Player parts will be assigned.
- F 11.18 **Phase 3 of Formal Translation Project due.**
- Th 11.24 Thanksgiving Break
- Th 12.1 Read Chaucer's *Reeve's Tale* (BT 327-45). Translate lines 148-336. Audio files on eR. **Graded take-home exercise due:** unidentified dialect passages.
- Th 12.8 Read and translate Malory's *Morte Darthur* (eR). Audio files on eR. **Final Exam Prep.**
- F 12.9 **Final Draft of Formal Translation Project due.**
- Th 12.15 **Final Exam** at 5:30-7:30pm.  
Blue books are optional, but some form of paper is required.

### Course Objectives

This course provides an introduction to those principal dialects of Middle English, demonstrated by selected readings, in the context of the development of the language from Old English to Early Modern English (c. 1150-1500). We will be looking at the language both diachronically (the historical development) and synchronically (the differentiation of dialect features at a given time). The primary goal of the course is to familiarize students with the range of texts available in different dialects during the period. Students should, for example, be able at the end of the course to read *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in the original North-West Midlands dialect with a full appreciation of the contribution of the language to the artistry of the poem, and to recognize its difference from the London dialect of Chaucer.

### Learning Outcomes

At end of the course, students should be able:

- to acquire a working knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary of Middle English
- to evidence knowledge of the historical and linguistic development of Middle English
- to be able to identify linguistic features of the dialects of Middle English, such as
- to be able to identify the provenance and date of a Middle English text on the basis of phonology, morphology, syntax and lexical peculiarities
- to provide working translations of Middle English texts

–to conduct research using appropriate methods and tools for Medieval Studies

### Course Policies

**1. Attendance** is mandatory. Since your progress in the course will depend a great deal on what we discuss in class, I expect class attendance and participation (actual contributions to the class discussion). I will pass out attendance sheets, and it is your responsibility to sign the sheets. So if the sheet passed you by, come up to the desk and sign at the end of class. Half of your participation grade is based on attendance. Every missed class will drop your participation grade 5 points. **Note:** While you are welcome to check with me on what you have missed, I cannot “reteach” material you missed during my office hours or over email. Please consult with your peers for notes.

**2. Tests and Papers:** Separate instructions are posted on the class webpage for each test and paper. Several of the exercises can be found on eReserves. Tests are closed book and emphasize detail knowledge through ids, translation, and essay questions. Papers must conform to the presentational guidelines set forth in the *Guide to Style* or the *MLA* and be submitted on time. Papers should represent your best effort and will be graded accordingly. Please note that I encourage you to discuss topics, outlines, and rough drafts with me during my office hours or via email.

**3. Class Discussion and Participation:** Every student is expected to contribute to the class discussion, and I devise exercises to facilitate that.

**4. Assignments:** Students must attempt **all** assignments to pass the course. You cannot simply skip an assignment because you are happy with your grade at the time; hence you cannot, for instance, skip the final.

**5. Pertinent Websites:** My own website contains a file for this class with links to pertinent medieval sites and items on the syllabus that have web links. All handouts will be available from the website.

**6.** The English Department affirms its commitment to the joint responsibility of instructors and students to foster and maintain a positive learning environment.

**7. Equal Access:** If you have a qualified disability that requires some form of accommodation to ensure your equal access to learning in this class, please see me as soon as possible so that we can work together to address your needs.

**8. Laptops:** If you are using a laptop during class time, I require that you email me after class the notes you have taken during class.

**9. Cell Phones:** No cell phone use or texting in this class. Turn your phones off.

**10. Plagiarism.** Don't do it! For clarification, see #102-107 in the *Guide to Style* online.