

Spring 2007 ♦ ENGL 451A/551-001 (#22530/27914)  
TH 4:00-6:30 ♦ MH 206

**Dr. Obermeier**

***Middle English Heroes, Saints, and Lovers***

Office Hours: TTh 1:30-2:30, and by Appointment in HUM 321

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**Required Texts**

*The Book of Margery Kempe*. Ed. Lynn Staley. Norton, 2001.

*The Lais of Marie de France*. Trans. Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby. Penguin 1986.

Langland, William. *Piers Plowman*. Eds. Elizabeth Robertson and Stephen Shepherd. Norton 2006.

Malory, Sir Thomas. *Le Morte Darthur: The Winchester Manuscript*. Ed. Helen Cooper. Oxford UP, 1998.

Shepherd, Stephen. *Middle English Romances*. Norton, 1995.

Obermeier, Anita. *Guide to Style*, 2005. (\$2) Order from me.

Osborn Bokenham. *A Legend of Holy Women*. Trans. Sheila Delany. U of Notre Dame P, 1992.

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Ed. Helen Cooper et al. Oxford UP, 1999.

*York Mystery Plays*. Ed. Beadle and King. Oxford UP, 1995.

eReserves: <http://ereserves.unm.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1284>. Password = study451551.

Hard copy Reserve in Zimmerman Library.

Other sources on course webpage: <http://www.unm.edu/~aobermei/Eng4515512/index4515512.html>

**Course Requirements**

**Undergraduates:**

1 4-5-page paper worth 15%  
1 8-10-page paper worth 25%  
1 In-class midterm worth 10%  
1 In-class final worth 20%  
Written Responses worth 15%  
Class Participation worth 15%

**Graduates:**

1 4-5-page paper worth 10%  
1 15-page paper & Annotated Bibliography worth 30%  
1 In-class midterm worth 10%  
1 In-class final worth 20%  
Written Responses worth 15%  
Class Participation worth 15%

For grading rubrics, see class webpage.

**Tentative Syllabus**

eReserve (eR); Hard Copy Reserve (R); Link on class webpage (CWP)

- TH 1.18 Introduction to the Course: Historical and Linguistic Background. Video Presentations: *English Goes Underground*; *Cities and Cathedrals of the MA*; *The Feudal System*.
- TH 1.25 **The Norman Conquest and Its Literary Aftermath**: CD-ROM Presentation: *The Bayeux Tapestry*; “The Proverbs of Alfred” (eR); “Poema Morale” (eR); “The Owl and the Nightingale” (eR), ME version in the online *Middle English Compendium*. **Response 1 due.**
- TH 2.1 Marie de France: *Lais*; “Dame Sirith” (eR); translation on CWP; “The Land of Cockayne” (eR); William Dunbar, “The Two Married Women and the Widow,” ME and translation on (eR). **Response 2 due.**
- TH 2.8 **Chivalry and Romance**: Shepherd, *Middle English Romances*: “Reading Middle English” (xv-xx); *Ywain and Gawain (75-173)*, translation of Chrétien’s version on CWP; John Finlayson (428-55 optional). **Response 3 due.**

- F 2.9           **Last day to change grading options.**
- TH 2.15       Shepherd, *Middle English Romances: Sir Orfeo* (174-190), translation on eR; *Sir Launfal* (190-219); *The Wedding of Syr Gawen and Dame* (243-67), translation on CWP; Erich Auerbach (411-27); Gisela Guddat-Figge (498-506); **Response 4 due.**
- TH 2.22       *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, ME texts and other resources on CWP. **Response 5 due.**
- F 2.23           **Last day to drop a course without a grade.**
- TH 3.1       **Margery Kempe and the Mystics:** Video Presentation: *Visions of Prophecy, Voices of Power; The anchoress's Rule* (eR); *The Book of Margery Kempe* (1-88 top); *The Constitutions of Thomas Arundel* (187-96); Nicholas Watson (299-301); *The Book of Saint Bride* (207-18); Lynn Staley (236-42); **Response 6 due.**
- TH 3.8       *The Book of Margery Kempe* (88-184); *The Life of Marie d'Oignies* (218-22); Optional: Karma Lochrie (243-56); Clarissa W. Atkinson (225-36); David Aers (256-63); Kathleen Ashley (264-76); Gail McMurray Gibson (276-84); Sarah Beckwith (284-87); Caroline Walker Bynum (288-98). **Midterm Exam Prep. Optional Response.**
- 3.11-16       Spring Break
- TH 3.22       **Midterm Exam.** Blue books are optional, but some form of paper is required. **Visionary Literature:** *The Shewings of Julian of Norwich* (202-7) and other selections on CWP.
- TH 3.29       William Langland, *Piers Plowman*: Prologue, Passus I-VII (2-122); Optional: "Whore of Babylon" (372); ME Plague Responses (427-28); Statutes of Laborers and Pleading (28-30); Chaucer, "General Prologue" (453-62); "Parliament of Mice and Rats" (488); "Summary of the Poem" (495-502); Kane, "Who Is William Langland" (12-13); Salter and Pearsall, "Allegory and Realism" (514-22); Hanna, "Dating of the A, B, C Versions" (514-22). **Paper 1 due.**
- TH 4.5       **Saints Lives:** Osborn Bokenham, *A Legend of Holy Women*: Prologue and Legends (3-195), esp. Margaret, Anne, Faith, Agnes, Dorothy, Mary Magdalen, Katherine, Cecilia, Agatha, Elizabeth; ME version in EETS o.s. 206 (R). **Response 7 due.**
- TH 4.12       **The Arthurian Legend and Malory:** Wace, *Roman de Brut* (eR); Layamon, *Brut* (eR); *The Alliterative Morte Arthure* (eR); ME versions in the *Middle English Compendium*; Video Presentation: *Malory's Morte Darthur: Anatomy of a Legend*; Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, intro and text (vii-xxiii, 3-33, 50-81, 95-168). **Response 8 due.**
- TH 4.19       Malory (311-467). **Response 9 due.**
- F 4.20       **Medieval Banquet. 6:30 pm.**
- TH 4.26       Malory (468-527); **Medieval Drama:** Video Presentation: *From Sanctuary to Stage; The York Mystery Plays*, esp. *Fall of Man* (8-14); *The Flood* (21-32); *Joseph's Trouble about Mary* (48-58); *The Flight into Egypt* (79-87); *The Temptation* (98-105); Christ before Pilate (154-74). **Response 10 due.**
- TH 5.3       *The York Mystery Plays, The Crucifixion* (211-21); *The Death of Christ* (222-36); *The Last Judgement* (267-79); Video Presentation: *Highlights of the York Mystery Plays*; selection of ME lyrics (eR). Conclusion and **Final Exam Review. Paper 2 due.**
- TH 5.10       Final Exam: 5:30-7:30 in MH 206. Blue books are optional, but some form of paper is required.

### Course Objective

This course is designed for students brave enough to join our adventure-filled quest to explore the mysteries of medieval minds, texts, and art from the Norman Conquest to Malory and to relish in that period's great variety of literary forms. We start this historical, linguistic, and literary enterprise with the *Bayeux Tapestry*, art with text, fighting alongside Anglo-Saxon warriors. Then we will pray with English saints, sleuth with historians, learn the art of courtly love from medieval knights and ladies, look at the nature of God with mystics, fiddle with medieval minstrels, and watch biblical drama unfold. This course is an introductory sampling of medieval literature (and some art) produced in England and the immediate Continent between 1066 and 1500 CE. The original texts are in Latin, Anglo-Norman, and various dialects of Middle English, which we will study in modern English, in bi-lingual facing-page translations, and the easier ones in Middle English. The texts cover various secular and religious genres, including epic, debate, saints' lives, *fabliau*, *lais*, romance, drama, allegory, and lyrics. The goal of the course is to give you a sense of the variety and range of writings of the period, and to place those writings in their cultural, linguistic, and historical contexts. When appropriate and available, visual and aural material will be presented both to complement the written text and to deepen the overall experience of medieval culture.

### Course Policies

**1. Tests and Papers:** Separate instructions will be handed out for each test and paper. Tests are closed book and emphasize detail knowledge through ids, analysis and close reading through passage ids, and synthesis abilities through essay questions.

**2. 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. Your participation grade will be affected after **1** unexcused absence (from a B+ to a B for one additional absence, etc.). An excused absence is a doctor's note, letter from an employer, etc. If you have an emergency situation, you can leave a message on my voice mail or email. **Note:** While you are welcome to check with me on what you have missed, I do not "reteach" class periods you missed during my office hours or over email. Please consult with your fellow students for notes.

**3. Written Responses:** You are expected to write a brief 1-page response for each session indicated, discussing the readings for that day or since the last response. These responses should be informal, journal-like, **typed** pieces, expressing your thoughts and reactions to the text. Do not be afraid to express puzzlement and unfamiliarity or even delight and interest. I am interested in your untutored, uncritical reactions to the texts. We will leave more structured and analytical writing for the formal papers. Each finished response will receive 10 points of credit; flimsy or superficial responses will receive only partial credit.

**4. Assignments:** Students must attempt **all** assignments to pass the course. This means that 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:** Generally, all handouts will also be posted to the class website. I will keep you apprised as to the availability of other materials and links. I suggest that you visit it soon to avail yourself of the tools offered there, such as course and content links, as well links to *Middle English Compendium* and the *Middle English Dictionary*.

**6. Plagiarism:** Don't do it! For clarification, see statements **#102-7** in *Guide to Style*.

**7. Cell Phones:** Please turn them off or put them on vibrate.