

## Paper 2

**Content:** Write a 15-page research paper (plus works cited) on medieval lyrics from our syllabus (and/or additional lyrics cleared with me). Additionally, provide a literature review (6-8 pages) including ten secondary sources on your topic **OR** do a review of a scholarly book (4-5 pages), preferably one that would help you in writing your paper.

### Suggestions for Topics

1. Apply a modern critical approach to a set of medieval lyrics.
2. Examine a subgenre of the lyric, such as a canso, sirventes, sonnet, etc.
3. Examine a set of poems by a single author.
4. Discuss political poems and situate them in their historical context.
5. Pick out a motif and discuss it in a set of lyrics—for instance,
  - treatment of or attitudes towards women,
  - nature,
  - beauty ideals,
  - attitudes towards religion, etc.
6. Discuss representations of the poet persona.

### 7. A topic of your choice cleared with me first.

If you would like to add lyrics not on the syllabus, you should consult the Lyrics Bibliography for collections, etc. Please include lyrics not in our books on eReserve as an appendix with your final paper.

**Definition of a Literature Review:** A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers. Occasionally, you will be asked to write one as a separate assignment, but more often it is part of the introduction to an essay, research report, or thesis. In writing the literature review, your purpose is to convey to your reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. As a piece of writing, the literature review must be defined by a guiding concept (e.g., your research objective, the problem or issue you are discussing, or your argumentative thesis). It is not just a descriptive list of the material available, or a set of summaries.

Besides enlarging your knowledge about the topic, writing a literature review lets you gain and demonstrate skills in two areas:

**information seeking:** the ability to scan the literature efficiently, using manual or computerized methods, to identify a set of useful articles and books

**critical appraisal:** the ability to apply principles of analysis to identify unbiased and valid studies.

See the course webpage for several links about Literature Reviews and how to write them as well as some samples on the Sample Paper website.

If you choose the **Book Review** option, see the course webpage for a link about book reviews and how to write them.

**Format:** I will **NOT ACCEPT** papers that do not follow the guidelines outlined in the online *Guide to Style* containing the format guidelines of the *MLA*, plus instructions on writing papers, sample introductory paragraphs with developed theses, frequent errors in critical writing, and a list of tools for the literature student. Review documentation procedures and follow the distinctions outlined for shorter and longer prose and poetry quotations. Persistent errors in format will result in lower grades.

**Sources:** (Even if you know this already, I am going to repeat it anyway). As few of those sources as possible should be online sources, such as respectable websites. In case of doubt, run the source by me first. Full-text databases are NOT considered online sources, as they usually only make regular scholarly journal articles available online. You should consult scholarly books and journals. Start with the *International MLA Bibliography* (NOT the Index of Periodicals) in and/or the *International Medieval Bibliography* in the UNM database system. Links to those and others are on the class website. After you identify potential books and articles in these databases, you need to check if they might be available through one of the online full-text resources or in the stacks in the form of essay collections. If not, you can order them through Interlibrary Loan (ILL): <http://illiad.unm.edu/illiad/logon.html>. Articles come through in a few days as pdf files, but you clearly must plan ahead. You should also search **Libros** for books on your topic, and you might try **WorldCat** in the database section. It lists all books published, while Libros only contains what UNM has.

**Structure:** I would like to reiterate that you are writing a **formal** paper, both in content and in style. Thus, your paper needs an introduction providing a context and a precisely phrased thesis at the end of the first paragraph (see especially #2-3 in *Guide to Style*). I encourage you to edit, revise, and proofread your papers, striving for coherence, grammatical correctness, and good transitions. **First drafts rarely hold up to critical scrutiny. I am available in office hours or via email to discuss ideas, outlines, and drafts of your paper with you before it is due.** Sample papers can be accessed on the class website with a UNM netid and password.

**Note:** The following sections in the *Guide to Style* might be especially helpful for this assignment: **1-10, 28-30, 32, 42-50, 53-62, 72-76, 81-83**. Also see **102-7** for proper usage of quotations and paraphrases.

**Due Dates:**

**Literature Review:** Your literature review should be a step in the process to your final paper and thus should be turned in by **4.15.2011** via email.

**Final Paper:** Final version due Sunday, **5.1.2011** via email.