

Paper 1

Content: Write a 5-page critical paper on one of the works we read including *Troilus and Criseyde*. I suggest you do not use secondary sources for this paper, unless you really wish to.

Suggestions for Topics

1. Chaucer's use of the dream-vision form.
2. Chaucer's use of the dreamer-protagonist persona in dream visions.
3. Chaucer's depiction of love (define courtly or medieval love).
4. The influence of *The Romance of the Rose* or Boethius.
5. Chaucer's use of classical mythology or classical literature ("olde bokes").
6. Contrast the roles of Venus and Nature in *PF*.
7. What is the function of the Parliament in *PF*?
8. Write a characterization of any character of your choice.
9. Examine the significance of any female figure to the work I which she appears.
10. Use a feminist approach on one or more of the Chaucerian texts.
11. A topic of your choice. Please clear it with me first.

Format: follow the guidelines outlined in the *MLA* or the *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. Failure to provide the correct form will result in lower grades. For instance, do not forget to provide a Works Cited page, even if you only list primary works. An explanation of grade rubrics can be found on my website. Sample English literature papers are also available on my website.

Structure: On this handout, you will find only topics. You need to have an opinion about the topic, which will then form your thesis statement. I would like to reiterate that you are writing **formal** papers, both in content and in style. Thus, your papers need a context-providing introduction with a coherently organized and precisely phrased thesis at the end of the first paragraph (see especially #1-3 in *Guide to Style*). The introduction of an essay sets the stage for the paper; specifically the thesis is the working idea of your paper and controls the rest of the paper; thus you are obligated to follow it, or else your paper will prove invalid.

Write the actual paper but do not hand it in. Good writing needs several drafts, and you should revise as often as you can, striving for coherence, grammatical correctness, and good transitions. First drafts rarely hold up to critical scrutiny. **Proofread!** I am available to discuss ideas, outlines, and drafts of your papers with you before they are due.

Due Date: March 13, 2008