

Literature and the Arts: Medieval to Modern

Course	English 211W, section 001, Fall 2017
Instructor	Ms. Jenny Bledsoe
Time and place	M/W/F 2:00–2:50pm, Callaway S101
Office hours	Wednesday, 3:00–4:00pm, Friday 12:00–1:00pm, and by appointment (Callaway N312)
Contact	jcbleds@emory.edu
Course website	eng211.jennycbledsoe.com
ScholarBlog site	scholarblogs.emory.edu/medievallitandart/

Course description, objectives, and texts

Course description

We will read medieval literature within its original multimedia context, an artistic culture which includes painting, manuscript illuminations, architecture, sculpture, and more. We will extend our analysis outside the chronological bounds of the Middle Ages (500–1500), pairing medieval works with later text(s) and/or image(s) inspired by medieval stories or themes. Through our readings, we will discuss the place of medieval literature as a form of “making” within a flourishing artistic culture, the ways that different art forms allow us to tell different types of stories, and how medieval narratives and themes permeate literature and art to the present.



London, British Library, MS Royal 19 C ii, f. 48v

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to ...

- ❖ interpret the visual and material—in addition to the textual—as components of meaning, both in literature and other artistic media
- ❖ analyze medieval literature within its historical context as part of a cultural matrix of “making” in multiple media
- ❖ recognize medieval themes in post-medieval literature and art
- ❖ assess the role of the physical manuscript, the digital facsimile, the critical edition, and the modern English translation in our reception of medieval texts
- ❖ compose writing assignments which evaluate texts and images from interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives
- ❖ understand and practice writing as a recursive process, involving research, drafting, revision, and reflection
- ❖ evaluate the ways in which their own writing, literature, and other art-making are mediated by the physical environment

Course texts

Required textbooks:

- ❖ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (Penguin, 1972). ISBN: 9780140135152.
- ❖ Elaine Treharne, *Medieval Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2015). ISBN: 9780199668496.

All other readings will be available through online sources. The schedule notes where each reading can be found, whether in a textbook (T), through online course reserves (R), or on the course website (W).

Course policies

Academic honesty policy. The Honor Code is in effect throughout the semester (http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor_code.html). By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during exams, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council. I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty seriously. Should I suspect that you engage in academic dishonesty in this course, I will refer the case to Emory's Honor Council. You may also receive an F on the assignment(s) in question.

Attendance policy. You will have three personal days for the entire semester. You may use them as you see fit. You do not need to inform me of the reason for your absence. After three absences, the attendance portion of your grade starts going down as follows:

- ❖ 4 absences = 90
- ❖ 5 absences = 85
- ❖ 6 absences = 80
- ❖ 7 absences = 75
- ❖ 8 absences = 70
- ❖ 9 absences = 65

Communication. Email is the best way to contact me if you have questions or concerns. Generally, I will respond to all student email within 24 hours (although on weekends and holidays, it may take a little longer). Likewise, there may be instances when I will need to contact you by email. It is your responsibility to check your email account at least once every 24 hours.

Late work policy. All assigned work must be completed on time. If no particular time is specified on the syllabus, you are expected to submit the assignment by the time class begins (2:00pm) on the day of the deadline. Late assignments will be lowered 5 points for every calendar day they are late, unless you have received approval from the instructor before the deadline (note: requests are not guaranteed approval). No assignment will be accepted more than 7 days past the due date.

Technology policy. Since many of our readings are available online as PDFs, many of you will want to consult readings on laptops or tablets during our discussions. When you are not actively using your laptop or tablet to view a reading for the class, I expect you to put your devices away and to give your full attention to the discussion. You should not use a cell phone at any time during class. I reserve the right to revoke your technology privileges if you use your devices for activities unrelated to class.

Resources

Access and disability resources. I strive to create an inclusive learning environment for all. I am invested in your success in this class and at Emory, so please let me know if anything is standing in the way of your doing your best work. This can include your own learning strengths, any classroom dynamics that you find uncomfortable, ESL issues, disability or chronic illness, and/or personal issues that impact your work. I will hold such conversations in strict confidence. Students with medical/health conditions that might impact academic success should visit Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR formerly the Office of Disability Services, ODS) to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Students who receive accommodations must present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to your instructor at the beginning of the semester, or when the letter is received.

Emory counseling services. Free and confidential counseling services and support are available from the Emory Counseling Center (404) 727-7450. This can be an invaluable resource when stress makes your work more challenging than it ought to be. <http://studenthealth.emory.edu/cs/>

Emory Writing Center. The Emory Writing Center offers 45-minute individual conferences to Emory College and Laney Graduate School students. The EWC is a great place to bring any project—from traditional papers to websites—at any stage in your composing process. EWC tutors can talk with you about your purpose, organization, audience, design choices, or use of sources. They can also work with you on sentence-level concerns (including grammar and word choice), but they won't proofread for you. Instead, they'll discuss strategies and resources you can use to become a better editor of your own work. The Writing Center is located in Callaway N-212. Visit writingcenter.emory.edu for more information and to make appointments.

Resources for multilingual students. If English is not your first language and if you need additional help with assignments in this or other college classes, you may benefit from working with specially trained ESL Tutors. These tutors are undergraduates who will support the development of both your English language and writing skills. Like Writing Center tutors, ESL tutors will not proofread your work. Language is best learned through interactive dialogue, so come to an ESL tutoring session ready to collaborate! ESL tutors will meet with you in the ESL Lab in Callaway S-108 and other designated locations on campus, and they will help you at any stage of the process of developing your written work or presentation. You may bring your work on a laptop or on paper. If you schedule an appointment in the ESL Lab, you may also bring your work on a USB stick as computers are available in the lab.

Visit the website of the Office for Undergraduate Education (<http://college.emory.edu/oue/>) and select “Student Support” and then “ESL Program” to schedule an appointment, read the tutoring policies, and view the offerings of the ESL Program (direct link to ESL Tutoring: <http://college.emory.edu/oue/student-support/esl-program/esl-tutoring.html>). If you do not have a scheduled appointment, you may want to meet with a drop-in tutor in the ESL Lab, Callaway S-108. Here, you may have less time with a tutor if other students are waiting, but you can briefly discuss an assignment and some of your concerns. For more information, visit the website or contact Levin Arnsperger at larnspe@emory.edu.

Course requirements and grading

Course requirements

Attendance and participation	15%
Presentation and textual analysis paper	15%
Visual analysis of medieval monster images	10%
Materiality analysis	10%
High Museum spatial analysis	10%
Exhibit of Pre-Raphaelite art with introductory video	10%
Chaucer's ABC project	15%
Final project: revised and expanded essay	15%

Assignment descriptions

- ❖ **Attendance and participation**, including at least one individual meeting with the instructor during the course of the semester (Grade of 0 on 1% of final grade if no individual meeting). (15%)
- ❖ **Individual presentation (IP) and textual analysis paper.** You will give one individual presentation during the course of the semester. These usually take place on Fridays, with some

exceptions. In this oral presentation of roughly five minutes, you will analyze a passage from a primary source (choosing from any of the week's readings), select and describe a related artistic work/image (browse ArtStor), and relate the text and image to a theoretical reading (any secondary source we've read prior to your presentation date is fine). Following your presentation, you will adapt your analysis into a three-page paper close reading the selected primary sources with the help of the theoretical text. Each student will sign up to give a presentation on Sept. 15, Sept. 29, Oct. 25, Nov. 10, Nov. 15, or Nov. 29. The paper will be due two weeks after your presentation; if you present on Nov. 29, your paper will be due no later than Monday, Dec. 11 at 5:00 pm (the deadline for final projects). Your slides should be uploaded to Canvas before class on your presentation day; your paper will be due on Canvas two weeks after your presentation, also before class time that day (15%: presentation 5%, paper 10%)

- ❖ **Visual analysis of medieval monster images.** On our course website, I have provided five images of monsters from medieval manuscripts. For this three- to four-page paper, you will select three images from the five provided. Your objective will be to determine what the image communicates about the monster as an anti-exemplary figure and also *how* it communicates. Along with the manuscript illumination, I will provide the text on the manuscript page in translation. You should consider how text and image interact to present the figure as exemplary or not. The paper accompanying the three selected images should be an academic essay. You should spend about one paragraph on each image and use the concluding paragraph(s) to compare and contrast the selected images. This paper will be submitted on Canvas. (10%)
- ❖ **Materiality analysis.** For this essay, you will analyze the material context of a medieval manuscript. I will provide several options on the course website, and you can find your own medieval manuscript to evaluate if you choose, though I recommend that you consult with me if you do choose your own. You should utilize the assigned readings and lectures about medieval manuscripts to complete your analysis. Your goal is to make an argument about how the physical characteristics of the manuscript/codex influence the way we interpret it. The analysis should be about 750 words (the equivalent of three pages). You might think of your essay as an exhibition catalog describing how materials affect the way we interpret (or read) a particular manuscript object. This assignment will be posted on our class ScholarBlogs site. You should integrate text and image when appropriate. You should consider the medium and audience for your composition as you write it. You are publishing this in a digital environment, so you should consider the rhetorical choices you can make that are particular to that context. Additionally, this essay should be aimed at a general audience (educated, but not specialists), so you should make it easy to understand how the materiality of the manuscript affects our reading of it. (10%)
- ❖ **High Museum spatial analysis.** Write a three-page reflection on your visit to the High Museum of Art. Describe and analyze the way that the museum utilized physical space to present its medieval art. Use *The Public Medievalist* article to consider how the exhibit relates to the IPOP theory of museum design, analyzing how the museum presents artworks through experiences focused on ideas (I), on people (P), on objects (O), or on physical experiences (P). Feel free to include images from your visit to support your argument about the museum's use of physical space. This paper will be submitted on Canvas. (10%)
- ❖ **Exhibit of Pre-Raphaelite art.** Create an online exhibit of five pieces of Pre-Raphaelite art organized around a medieval theme. You can utilize ArtStor to browse and locate the items for your exhibit. Introduce the exhibit with a short video (2–4 minutes). You can think of the video as the equivalent of a two-page paper which provides an opening statement about the medieval theme(s) which unite the objects you have selected; you might also discuss how each artwork represents a certain theme or story in a distinctive way. The exhibit and video will be posted on our class ScholarBlogs site. (10%)
- ❖ **Chaucer's ABC project.** In the middle of the semester, each student will be assigned a stanza from Chaucer's "ABC" poem. You will design a medieval-style manuscript page of the stanza. I

will provide you with a digital facsimile, critical edition, and Modern English translation of your assigned stanza. In a two- to three-page analysis, you will explore how the four different versions of your stanza represent the poem differently and how the various materials and editions shape the reading experience in different ways. You will turn in the material edition on the last day of class, and the accompanying analysis should be posted to Canvas. (15%)

- ❖ **Final project: revised and expanded essay.** You will revise and expand one of your earlier essays (perhaps the visual analysis, materiality analysis, or the textual analysis paper linked to your presentation). You will integrate research from at least two scholarly sources in your revised paper. You should revise the essay significantly, and it should be expanded by at least one full page. This essay should be posted to Canvas. (15%)
- ❖ Additional short, informal writing assignments may be added throughout the semester.

Grading rubric

For the above formal writing assignments that comprise 85% of your final grade, you will earn letter grades. Individual assignments will have their own assignment sheets which will articulate the standards for grading a particular assignment, but the following is a general description of the standards for each letter grade:

- ❖ Work that earns the grade of “A” will be *substantially above average*, well exceeding all of the expectations of the assignment.
- ❖ Work that earns the grade of “B” will be *above average*, meeting the assignment requirements and exceeding some of them.
- ❖ Work that earns the grade of “C” will be *satisfactory*, meeting the basic requirements of the assignment.
- ❖ Work that earn the grade of “D” will be *unsatisfactory*, not fully meeting all of the basic requirements of the assignment.
- ❖ Work that earns the grade of “F” will be *far below satisfactory*, falling substantially short of the basic requirements of that assignment.

Grades will be posted to Canvas.

Grading scale

Points/Percentage	Letter Grade	Emory point scale
93.00-100	A	4.0
90.00-92.99	A–	3.7
86.00-89.99	B+	3.3
83.00-85.99	B	3.0
80.00-82.99	B–	2.7
76.00-79.99	C+	2.3
73.00-75.99	C	2.0
70.00-72.99	C–	1.7
66.00-69.99	D+	1.3
60.00-65.99	D	1.0
0-59.99	F	0.0

Course schedule and logistics

Important dates for Fall 2017

Date	Event
August 23	Classes begin
August 30	End of Add/Drop/Swap

September 4	Labor Day, no classes
October 9–10	Fall Break
November 22–24	Thanksgiving Break
December 5	Classes end
December 6–16	Exam period

Final exam. No exam will be required. I will be available to meet with you about your final projects during the week after classes end. The final project (the revised and expanded essay) will be due by 5:00pm on Monday, December 11.

Course schedule

The course schedule may be modified slightly during the semester. Check the course website (eng211.jennycbledsoe.com) for updates. I will inform you during class of any changes to the reading and writing requirements. Informal writing assignments may be added during the semester.

Unit 1. Introductions

Week 1

W Aug. 23 Introduction to the course

F Aug. 25 Treharne, “Introduction: Endings and Beginnings” (1–11) (T); Marianne O’Doherty, “Where Were the Middle Ages?” *The Public Medievalist* (W); “A Beginner’s Guide to Medieval Europe,” *Khan Academy* (only the first lesson, “Introduction to the Middle Ages,” is required; the remaining sections are suggested) (W)

Week 2

M Aug. 28 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, chs 1–4 & 16–18 (2–6, 20–22) (R); Treharne, Ch 1: “Literary Origins” (12–22) & Ch 3: “Literary Spaces, Literary Identities” (36–54) (T)

W Aug. 30 Geoffrey Chaucer, “The Former Age” (read Middle English alongside the translation) (W); Chazelle, Doubleday, Lifshitz, & Remensnyder, “Introduction,” *Why the Middle Ages Matter* (1–14) (R)

F Sept. 1 Berger, Ch 1 (7–34) & Ch 4 (66–81 [visual essay]) (T); Hieronymous Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (painting) (W)

Unit 2. Art and the Other: Monsters, Amazons, and Travelogues

Week 3

M Sept. 4 No class. Labor Day.

W Sept. 6 Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Monster Theory, Seven Theses” (3–20) (R)

F Sept. 8 Manuscript illuminations of the Old English *Wonders of the East* (W); Treharne, Ch 5: “The Mighty and the Monstrous” (69–83) (T)

Week 4

M Sept. 11 *The Voyage of St Brendan* (211–45) (R)

W Sept. 13 Sir John Mandeville, *The Book of Marvels and Travels*, prologue in Middle English (W) & excerpts from Chs 3 & 13 (14–16, 62–68) (R)

F Sept. 15 Mandeville, *The Book of Marvels and Travels*, excerpts from Chs 14 & 15 (68–79) (R); browse digital facsimile of Mandeville manuscript (W) (3IPs)

Week 5

M Sept. 18 Paul B. Sturtevant, “Is ‘Race’ Real?” & “Were Medieval People Racist?,” *The Public Medievalist* (W); continue discussion of Mandeville, *Book of Marvels and Travels*

W Sept. 20 Berger, Ch 6 (113–27 [visual essay]) (T); peer review for visual analysis (bring a draft of at least two pages)

F Sept. 22 No class.

Deadline: Medieval monsters visual analysis

Week 6

M Sept. 25 Sir Walter Raleigh’s *Discoverie of Guiana* (130–38, 145–46, & 194–99) (R)

W Sept. 27 The Bayeux Embroidery and the virtual Game of Thrones tapestry (W); Andrew B. R. Elliott, “Introduction,” *Medievalism, Politics, and Mass Media* (1–5) (R)

F Sept. 29 Extra Credits’ “Historical Games” video (W); Paul B. Sturtevant, “Playing with the Middle Ages,” *The Public Medievalist* (W) (4IPs)

Unit 3. Manuscripts and Woodcuts: Books, Everyday Life, and Social Class

Week 7

M Oct. 2 Barbara Shailor, “The Medieval Book” (8–12, 18–20) (R); Ann Gibbons, “Goats, bookworms, a monk’s kiss: Biologists reveal the hidden history of ancient gospels,” *ScienceMag.org* (W); Treharne, Ch 2: “Textual Production and Reception” (23–35) (T)

W Oct. 4 Class visit to Pitts Theology Library’s special collections

F Oct. 6 William Langland’s *Piers Plowman*, prologue & pass. I–II (2–37, focus on translation, which appears on odd-numbered pages) (R); browse digital facsimile of *Piers Plowman* manuscript (W)

Week 8

M Oct. 9 No class. Fall break.

W Oct. 11 *Piers Plowman*, pass. III–IV (37–62, focus on translation, which appears on odd-numbered pages) (R); Treharne, Ch 4: “Individual and Community” (55–68)

F Oct. 13 William Morris’s *News from Nowhere*, chs 1, 2, 4, 9, & 10 (3–12, 20–22, & 45–64) (R)

Week 9

M Oct. 16 No reading. In class we will discuss manuscript illuminations of everyday life from the Luttrell Psalter as well as Morris’s medieval-inspired Kelmscott Press book designs.
Deadline: Materiality analysis

W Oct. 18 Morris’s *News from Nowhere*, chs 15, 29, 31, & 32 (78–85, 164–67, & 173–82) (R); more Kelmscott Press book designs (W)

F Oct. 20 Morris's textiles, poetry, and other art (W). *Introduce Chaucer's ABC project: Assign stanzas & start brainstorming material edition*

Unit 4. Painting, Architecture, and the Garden: Romance and the Romantics

Week 10

M Oct. 23 Guillaume de Lorris & Jean de Meun's *Romance of the Rose*, "The Garden of Pleasure," 3–21 (R); Treharne, Ch 6: "Love and Longing" (84–99) (T); browse digital facsimile of *Romance of the Rose* manuscript (W)

W Oct. 25 *Romance of the Rose*, "The Spring of Narcissus," 22–42 (R); images of medieval gardens (W) (3IPs)

F Oct. 27 *The Public Medievalist's* "Why you hate that museum and how to fix it" (W); "A Beginner's Guide to the Pre-Raphaelites," *Khan Academy* (W)

Saturday, October 28. Group trip to High Museum of Art from 9:00 a.m. –1:00 p.m., funded by Emory's Center for Creativity and the Arts

Week 11

M Oct. 30 No class today because of High Museum trip.

W Nov. 1 *Romance of the Rose*, "The Advice of the Old Woman," 191–224 (R)

F Nov. 3 Christine de Pizan, "The God of Love's Letter" & "Moral Teachings" (37–44) (R); Judith M. Bennett, "Feminist History & Women's History," *History Matters* (6–15, 28–29) (R)

Week 12

M Nov. 6 No reading; continue discussion of *Romance of the Rose*, Christine de Pizan, and Judith Bennett's essay. **Deadline: High Museum spatial analysis**

W Nov. 8 Christine de Pizan, excerpt from *The Book of the City of Ladies* (235–46) (R); Berger, Ch 2 (35–43 [visual essay]) & Ch 3 (45–64) (T)

F Nov. 10 Jean Gerson, *Treatise against the Romance of the Rose* (106–14) (R) (4IPs)

Week 13

M Nov. 13 Alfred Lord Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott" (poem) (W); John William Waterhouse, *The Lady of Shalott* (painting) (W)

W Nov. 15 John William Waterhouse, *Echo and Narcissus* (painting) (W); Edward Burne Jones, assorted paintings and stained glass (W) (4IPs)

Unit 5. Liturgical Art and Music: Mysticism, Gender, and the Saints

F Nov. 17 Amy Hollywood, "Gender, Agency, and the Divine in Religious Historiography" (R); wall paintings and stained glass series of saints' lives (W)

Week 14

M Nov. 20 No reading. View and discuss Pre-Raphaelite art exhibits in class.
Deadline: Exhibit with introductory video

W Nov. 22 No class. Thanksgiving break.

F Nov. 24 No class. Thanksgiving break.

Week 15

M Nov. 27 *The Book of Margery Kempe* (R); browse digital facsimile of Margery Kempe's manuscript (W)

W Nov. 29 "St Ursula and the 11,000 virgins" in *The Golden Legend* (R); Treharne, Ch 7: "Death and Judgement" (100–113) (3IPs)

F Dec. 1 Reliquaries of the 11,000 virgins (W); Hildegard's "St Ursula" song (W); a scene from Christopher Williams's 2005 performance, *Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins* (W)

Week 16

M Dec. 4 Discuss Chaucer ABC projects

Deadline: Chaucer's ABC edition project

M Dec. 11, 5pm **Deadline: Revised and expanded essay**