

ENG512: Literature of the Anglo-Saxons (Spring Term 2012)



Time: Mondays, 5pm-7:30pm

Room: END266

Professor: Dr. Patrick McBrine

Email: mcbrinep1@southernct.edu (web: pmcbrine.com)

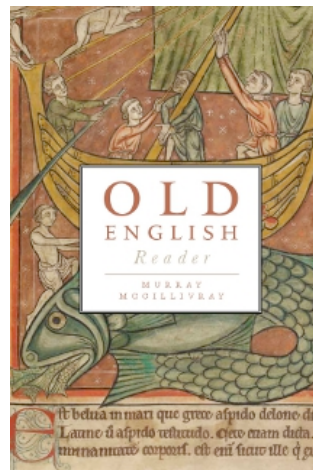
Office: Engleman D254

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 12pm-2pm; Fri 10am-11am

Brief Description: This course offers an introduction to the language and literature of pre-Conquest England. The range of texts for reading and translation includes stories about the miraculous origins of English verse, the beast-killing heroics of Beowulf, the disastrous defeat of the Maldon men, who strove to save their homes from slaughterous Vikings ... and failed; or did they? We'll also read some more contemplative verse, including the mournful meditations of the hope-hindered warrior in the *Wanderer* and the peculiar confession of the Holy Cross, which tells its side of the Crucifixion. We might also have the time to read a saint's life or two.

Approach: This class aims to introduce this literature in the original, which means you'll be learning another language: Old English. Old English is as heavily inflected as many modern languages, which means you'll not be able to get by faking it. This is going to take some time.

Required texts (always bring your texts to class):



McGillivray., Murray. *A Gentle Introduction to Old English* (Broadview Press, 2011).

McGillivray., Murray. *Old English Reader* (Broadview Press, 2011).

Course Requirements and Grade distribution:

Weekly Quizzes	20%
Test 1 (Feb 13 th)	15%
Test 2 (Mar 26 th)	20%
Test 3 (Apr 30 th)	20%
Research Paper (Apr 23 rd)	20%
Memorization of <i>Caedmon's Hymn</i>	05%

Quizzes (20%). These weekly quizzes will ensure you're keeping up with the grammar. At the beginning of each class, we'll have short quiz of about 10-15 min. They will test knowledge of essential paradigms and aspects of the grammar. As we progress, the quizzes will become more involved; they will not simply ask you to reproduce paradigms but also to translate sentences and passages in and out of Old English. Review you notes and grammar carefully.

Test 1 (15%). The first test is primarily a diagnostic one. It will test only your knowledge of the grammar to that point. You can expect short answer questions (e.g., what is the accusative singular of *word*) and questions that ask you to reproduce paradigms (e.g., write out the forms for the verb 'to be' in the Present tense). The test is part of a process that is meant to ensure you have enough training to handle translation without being overwhelmed by grammar you can't remember in addition to words you don't know. You'll also notice that this first test is worth slightly less than the others (15% and not 20%), to give you a chance to adjust to my expectations and those of the tests. Still, review you grammar carefully and you'll do well.

Test 2 (20%). Worth more, because the stakes and expectations are now higher. You'll still get basic grammar questions (e.g., what is the form for this word, etc.) but you'll also be asked to translate sentences and brief passages. At this stage, you may also be asked to comment on the literary significance of a given passage or word. For example, the passage may have language that is characteristic of a certain genre or text. I may ask you to identify and comment upon it.

Test 3 (20%). Your *pièce de résistance*. Knowing what you'll know at this point, this is your chance to shine. Yes, there may be the odd grammar question, but this test will focus on the literature and ask you to translate and comment on unadapted passages Old English poetry. You'll have to use the language skills you've acquired and your knowledge of the literature.

Research Paper (20%). Maybe this is your *pièce de résistance*. You must write a research paper on some aspect of Anglo-Saxon literature. It will require you to consult secondary sources in the library and online (I have a deal of books in my office as well taht are not available elsewhere). The paper is to be 10-15 pages, double-spaced and must engage the language of the original. In other words, you must quote the Old English in the original, provide your own translation of the passages and words AND provide a solid literary analysis. Do this, and you've successfully met the expectations of the course (i.e. to know the language well enough to work with it). I'll distribute suggested topics, but I would prefer you find your own.

Memorization of *Caedmon's Hymn* (05%). This'll make sure you leave the class with something to remember. *Caedmon's Hymn* marks the beginning of recorded history in English literature—it's the earliest thing that survives in verse—so it makes sense you should know it and be able to recite it on demand. In the end, you'll come to my office and recite the thing for me in person. I find it fitting that Caedmon himself did not want to recite poetry for his audience and ran out of the room to avoid it. You'll not have that luxury and, I'm afraid, no angel will come to your aid this time (or maybe one will, yikes). Take the time and learn it!

Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory and you alone are responsible for work you miss because of absence, including handouts, assignments, etc. I allow **one absence**, excused or otherwise, but each absence after that will result in an incremental reduction of your final grade. As per English department guidelines, seven or more absences (the equivalent of more than two weeks of class) will result in failure of the course. That said, emergencies happen.

Schedule

Note: The Schedule is subject to change according to our progress and the creative impulse of the class. Updated syllabi will be emailed. Also, always do the assigned work and/or readings before that day's class.

Week 1 (Jan 23)

Part I Lecture: Introducing Anglo-Saxon England
Part II Learning: Terminology, Pronunciation, Strong nouns (Txt 1-3)



Week 2 (Jan 30)

Q1 Part I Lecture: The Beginnings of English Literature (*Caedmon*)
Part II Learning: Demonstratives and Verbs (Txt 4-5)

Week 4 (Feb 6)

Q2 Part I Lecture: The Heroic Code and Battle of Maldon
Part II Learning: Weak Verbs, Subjunctive, more nouns (Txt 6-7)

Week 5 (Feb 13)

T1

Part I Testing: Test 1 (Diagnostic test of Ch. 1-7)
Part II: Strong Verbs, Pronouns, Adjectives (Txt 8-9)



Week 6 (Feb 20)

No Class: President's Holiday

Week 7 (Feb 27)

Q3 Part I Lecture: Chapters on Word Order, Meter (Txt 11-12)
Part II Learning: Translation of *Abraham and Isaac* (Txt 101-15)

Week 8 (Mar 5)

Q4 Part I Lecture: The Physical Remains of ASE (Sites and Manuscripts)
Part II Learning: Translation of *The Story of Othhere* (Txt 127-150)



Week 9 (Mar 12)

Q5 Part I Learning: Translation of *The Story of Oththere* Continued
Part II Lecture: The Literature of the Old English Elegies

Week 10 (Mar 19)

No Class—Spring Recess (19th-25th)

T2

Week 11 (Mar 26)

Part I Testing: Translation Test Based on Wks. 7, 8 and 9
Part II Learning: Translation of *The Wanderer* (Txt 2 pp. 155-6)

Week 12 (Apr 2)

Q6 Part I Learning: Translation of *The Wanderer* Cont. (Txt 2 pp. 157-8)
Part II Lecture: The Literary Achievement of *Beowulf*.

Week 13 (Apr 9)

Q7 Part I Learning: Translation of *Beowulf* (Txt 2 pp. 78-81)
Part II Lecture: Sutton Hoo and Staffordshire Hoard

Week 14 (Apr 16)

Q8 Part I Learning: Translation of *Beowulf* (selections TBA)
Part II Lecture/Discussion: *The Battle of Maldon* (handout)

Week 15 (Apr 23)

Essay Due Q9 Part I Learning: Reading TBA
Part II Lecture: Lecture TBA

Week 16 (Apr 30)

T3 Q10 Part I Testing: Brief Oral Test to count as Quiz 10
Part II Testing: **Translation Test Based on Wks. 11-16.**



Plagiarism Defined: Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's writing or of his or her words, ideas, facts, and arguments. Plagiarism is never acceptable in university writing.

You plagiarize when, in quoting phrases, sentences, or paragraphs, you fail to use quotation marks (or, for longer passages, blocked quotes) or when you fail to identify the source of each quotation.

You plagiarize when, in restating borrowed material in the original language or rewritten in your own words, you fail to identify the source of each borrowing. Proper source documentation requires that you provide at least the author, work, place and date of publication, and page number, or URL from the Internet.

You plagiarize when, in taking from another writer ideas or facts which cannot be considered common knowledge, you fail to identify the source of each borrowing, giving the author, work, place and date of publication, and page number, or URL from the internet.

You plagiarize when, without acknowledgment, you submit as your own work a paper written wholly or in part by some other person. It is wrong to claim as your own the words, ideas, or facts of another person, or an anonymous source such as the Internet.

Letter/Grade Equivalencies (provided by Mike Shea, Chair, English Department): Know that I observe the following criteria for the assignment of final grades. Generally, I reserve A+ for truly exceptional work, which must include strong evidence of original thinking:

Exceptional	Superior	Average	Passing	Failure
A+ (96-100) 4.0 GPA	B+ (87-89) 3.3 GPA	C+ (77-79) 2.3 GPA	C- (70-72) 1.7 GPA D+ (67-69) 1.3 GPA	F (0-59)
A (93-95) 4.0 GPA	B (83-86) 3.0 GPA	C (73-76) 2.0 GPA	D (63-66) 1.0 GPA	
A- (90-92) 3.7 GPA	B- (80-82) 2.7 GPA		D-(60-62) .7 GPA	

Definitions of 'Exceptional,' 'Superior,' 'Average,' 'Passing,' and 'Failure,' are adapted from The University of Toronto's Undergraduate Handbook.

Exceptional: Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

Superior: Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Average: Student who is profiting from his/her university experience; understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.

Passing: Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.

Failure: Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Late assignments: I do not accept late assignments without a valid excuse. Late assignments will be penalized 3% per day beginning the day after the assignment is due. You may submit an email version of the assignment as proof of its completion, but you must still submit a hard copy on the following day (or on the Monday after the weekend, which is sometimes the case). **3% per day**

Documented Disabilities: Southern Connecticut State University provides reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities on an individualized basis and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a documented disability, the University's Disability Resource Center (DRC) will work with you to decide appropriate accommodations. Before you receive accommodations in this class, you must make an appointment with the Disability Resource Center located at EN C-105A. To discuss your approved accommodations with me or other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, make an appointment with me as soon as possible. I will accommodate you in any way I can, including extended time for assignments and reformatting of tests for accessibility.