

ENGL 3320: Anglo-Saxon Literature

Spring 2011, T/Th 11:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Dedman Life Science Bldg 110

Instructor: Irina Dumitrescu
Office: 244 Dallas Hall
Email: idumitrescu@smu.edu
Telephone: 214-768-3078
Office hours: T/Th 3:30-4:30 p.m.

This course is an introduction to the literature and culture of the Anglo-Saxons. We will read a variety of texts in translation, including *Beowulf* and other heroic poetry, laments, riddles, sermons, lives of saints and kings, charms for dealing with stolen cattle and elfshot. Although the course focuses on Old English and Anglo-Latin literature in translation, we will also touch on the languages spoken and written by the Anglo-Saxons, their manuscript production, artistic creations, and intellectual life.

Learning Outcomes

Students will read broadly in Old English literature in modern translation.
Students will be able to identify major themes in early medieval poetry and prose.
Students will gain a basic historical background for the Anglo-Saxon period.
Students will be able to identify major genres of Anglo-Saxon writing.

Assignments

There will be three papers, circa 5-6 pp each. (Assignments to follow.) Papers are due on Blackboard, using SafeAssign. Late assignments will drop a full letter grade per day. If, in these days of plague and tribulation, you find yourself in an unexpectedly tight spot, please talk to me well before (not during, or after) the deadline.

We shall have one midterm, and one final examination. Pop quizzes throughout the semester will check that you have done your reading carefully.

I will be taking attendance every class. You may miss two classes with no excuse, but after that, every four classes missed will result in the reduction of your final mark by one letter grade. Using electronic devices such as cell phones and laptops in class constitutes mental absence, and will be marked as such. Your participation mark reflects your contribution to class discussion as well as your preparedness for class.

Ah, but what is this “preparedness for class” of which you speak?

Being prepared for class means that you have completed the reading assigned for that day, looked up assigned terms as well as any words you do not understand, reflected on and formulated your own questions about the reading before coming to class. You should

also bring the day's reading with you, whether as a book, printout, or photocopy. In other words, you should have the tools and preparation you need to be an active participant in class discussion.

Grading Scale

Papers x 3	15% each
Participation and pop quizzes	15%
Midterm	15%
Final examination	25%

Required Texts

Available at the SMU bookstore:

- Greg Delanty and Michael Matto, eds. *The Word Exchange: Anglo-Saxon Poems in Translation* (Norton)
 - Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford World Classics)
 - Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, eds. *Alfred the Great* (Penguin)
 - Seamus Heaney, *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* (bilingual edition) (Norton)
- Printouts from Blackboard (*Always bring these to class!*)

Recommended background reading:

- James Campbell, *The Anglo-Saxons* (Penguin History)

Other Policies

Plagiarism

I judge plagiarism according to the SMU Honor Code on pp 180-186 of your Student Handbook or online at:
http://smu.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/PCL_05_HC.asp

This means that you may not pass off someone else's words, opinions, arguments, or even essay structure as your own.

THE PENALTY FOR PLAGIARISM IS FAILURE IN THE COURSE.

I will also file a faculty disposition with the Honor Council, and *may* refer the case to the Honor Council for a hearing. The Honor Council keeps track of students' Honor Code violations.

Please know that I consider plagiarism dishonest and an offense to teaching, scholarship, and the principles of a university. **IGNORANCE IS NEVER AN EXCUSE.** If you do not know how to cite your sources properly or whether a particular use of someone else's work is plagiaristic, please discuss it with me before you hand in the paper.

But what if I didn't know what I was doing was plagiarism?

Ignorance is never an excuse.

But what if all possible disasters happened in my life all at once?

First of all, you should always talk to me as early as possible so that I can help you devise a strategy to complete your work. I am very eager to help you do the best work you can, and want to see you succeed in the course on your own merits.

Second, my policy is to treat all cases of plagiarism equally, so hardship will not reduce the penalty for plagiarism. It is preferable to hand in a bad paper, a late paper, or no paper at all than to submit plagiarized work.

* Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) at 214-768-1470 or www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp <<http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp>> to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4; an attachment describes the DASS procedures and relocated office.)

* Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

* Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

* Other Support: The Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center (202 Loyd Center, smu.edu/alec) offers study-skill workshops and can help you with learning strategies and test preparation. Their dedicated Learning Disabilities Specialist, Alexa Taylor (214-768-1918) can help establish eligibility for counseling and accommodations for students with learning disabilities. The Writing Center (202 Loyd Center, smu.edu/alec/wc.asp) can help you with the process of writing papers. In addition, the reference librarians at the Fondren Library Center would love it if you asked for their help with research.

Changes: This syllabus is subject to change. I will announce any changes in class and post them on Blackboard.

Schedule of Classes

Jan 18	Introduction to course: Deor (but start reading Bede!)
Jan 20	Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England – background, sources, materials
	History
Jan 25	Bede – Bk 1, Campbell: “The End of Roman Britain”
Jan 27	Bede – Bk 2, Campbell: “The Lost Centuries: 400-600”
Feb 1	Bede – Bk 3, Campbell: “The First Christian Kings”
Feb 3	Bede – Bk 4, Campbell: “The Age of Bede and Aethelbald”
Feb 8	Bede – Bk 5
Feb 10	<i>Alfred the Great</i> : Asser’s Life of King Alfred, Campbell: “The Ninth Century”
Feb 15	<i>Alfred the Great</i> : Asser’s Life of King Alfred (cont), Extracts from the writings of King Alfred
Feb 17	Aelfric (Blackboard), Campbell: “The Return of the Vikings”
	Epic (historical)
Feb 22	Battle of Maldon. Paper 1 due.
Feb 24	Battle of Brunanburgh
Mar 1	Midterm
	Epic (legendary, sacred)
Mar 3	Beowulf Manuscript + Beowulf
Mar 8	Beowulf
Mar 10	Beowulf
Mar 12-20	SPRING BREAK
Mar 22	Beowulf
Mar 24	Beowulf & Sutton Hoo
Mar 29	Judith
Mar 31	Juliana. Paper 2 due.
	Elegy
Apr 5	The Wanderer
Apr 7	The Wife’s Lament, Wulf and Eadwacer
Apr 12	Dream of the Rood
	Wisdom
Apr 14	Phoenix, Panther, Whale
Apr 19	Soul and Body
Apr 21	Riddles (Hoards 1-3)
Apr 26	Riddles (Hoards 4-6)
Apr 28	The Gifts of Men & Charms. Paper 3 due.
May 4-10	Exam period