

**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, FILM, THEATRE, AND MEDIA STUDIES
ENGL 403 MEDIEVAL STUDIES: CHAUCER 2008 FY**

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Staff: Professor Robert Easting, VZ 901, tel. 463-6803, e-mail address: Robert.Easting@vuw.ac.nz
Classes: weekly on Thursdays 1-3, VZ 901, during trimester 1 and the first few weeks of trimester 2. Additional information will be made available via classes and Blackboard. Examination timetables will be posted on the English noticeboard on Floor 8 of Von Zedlitz.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES, AND CONTENT

The course attempts a detailed reading of the complete *Canterbury Tales*, examining each tale both as an independent item and as part of a larger structure. The course also requires a reading of *The Book of the Duchess*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, Boethius, *On the Consolation of Philosophy*, and the Guillaume de Lorris section of the *Le Roman de la Rose* in the Middle English translation. Students are expected to have read *Troilus and Criseyde*, and are encouraged to read *The House of Fame* and *The Legend of Good Women* (although there are not usually classes on these texts), and a selection of critical writing on the Tales. Students completing the course satisfactorily should have achieved a good ability to read Chaucer closely, with a heightened awareness of his linguistic, literary, and historical contexts.

Set text: *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Boston, 1987). Select bibliography supplied.

ASSESSMENT

1. **Course work 60%**

- (i) commentaries on selected excerpts: approximately 1500 words, worth 20%
due no later than 12 May 2008
- (ii) an essay: approximately 3500 words, worth 40%
due no later than 1 September 2008

Due dates and extensions: if you need an extension for handing in either of these required pieces of work, you should apply to me **before** it is due, providing supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, note from Counselling Service) as appropriate. If work is handed in **without an extension**, it will be accepted but will be penalized by lowering the result by one grade.

2. **End-of-year (17 Oct.—8 Nov. 2008), three-hour, Registry-conducted examination 40%**

Candidates will be required to answer one or more questions. You will be permitted to take an edition of Chaucer into the examination.

Assignments and examination questions will give students an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to read Chaucer in an informed and intelligent way.

WORKLOAD

About 18 hours per week including class contact hours. This means you should be able to read the appropriate tales and annotations at least twice before each session, and also consult secondary material.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete the assessment requirements, and are expected to be prepared for, attend, and participate fully in classes.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Robert Easting