

**Victoria University of Wellington**  
**School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies**

**ENGL 215 Old English Literature (2008 2/3)**  
**Course Information**

**Teaching Staff**

Christine Franzen (VZ 919, 463-6805), Course co-ordinator (christine.franzen@vuw.ac.nz)

**Classes**

Classes are held from 3:10 to 4:00 on **Monday** and **Tuesday** in **Easterfield LT 206**  
and on **Thursday** and **Friday** in **Kirk 204**.

Despite our having to move from a lecture theatre to a seminar room, **all classes are conducted as tutorials**. Any changes to the course programme or additional information will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Course Aims**

The course attempts, through a close study of set texts, to introduce characteristic forms and themes of Old English literature, especially poetry. Although a short period of intensive language learning is necessary to provide a reading knowledge of Old English, the course is essentially literary in approach.

**Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- demonstrate some proficiency in translating Old English prose and poetry;
- show an awareness of the characteristic forms and themes of Old English poetry;
- be responsive to the detail of the set texts;
- critically discuss the texts in a formal academic essay;
- demonstrate good work habits by coming to class having prepared the set work for each day; and
- in general, demonstrate a good standard of accuracy and attention to detail in reading, translating, analysing, and presenting written work.

**Set texts, to be purchased** (second-hand copies are fine):

**Needed at the beginning of the course:**

ENGL 215 *Introductory Grammar* (Student Notes).

ENGL 215 *The Lives of the English Saints* (Student Notes).

**Needed from Week 5 onwards:**

ENGL 215 *Background Reading* (Student Notes).

ENGL 215 *Running Glosses* (Student Notes).

John C. Pope, ed. *Eight Old English Poems*, 3rd edn., 2001.

(A secondhand copy of *Seven Old English Poems* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn.) is also fine).

**Recommended for Language Majors:**

Randolph Quirk and C. L. Wrenn, *An Old English Grammar*, 2nd edn., 1957.

**A reading list is found in the Background Reading Coursebook, pp. 1-3.**

### **Assessment/Relationship between assessment and course objectives**

The course is internally assessed: there is no final examination. Assessment is based on four pieces of work: two tests and two essays. The tests are designed to assess your ability to translate Old English prose and poetry and to ensure that your understanding of basic Old English grammar and vocabulary is sufficient to appreciate the texts in their original form. The poetry test and the essays test your ability to appreciate the characteristics and themes of Old English literature and to write coherently and intelligently on them. Essay topics will be distributed well in advance. Essays must be produced in accordance with the School's *Guidelines for SEFT Students*. Note particularly the University's statement on academic integrity and plagiarism, below.

**Prose Translation Test:** Friday 15 August on *The Life of St Edmund* and an unseen passage, with some grammar and vocabulary. (20%).

**Essay** on *The Life of St Edmund* and *The Battle of Maldon*. Due Tuesday 16 September (in class). Approximately 1500 words (30%).

**Poetry Test:** Tuesday 7 October on passages from *The Battle of Maldon*, *The Dream of the Rood*, *Deor*, and *The Wanderer*: this is basically a comprehension test, with short answers and some translation, critical commentary, scansion, and vocabulary. (20%).

**Essay** on *The Dream of the Rood*, *The Wanderer*, *Deor*, and *Wulf and Eadwacer*. Due 5:00 p.m. on Friday, 10 October, but may be handed in up until 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 15 October without penalty. Approximately 1500 words (30%).

**Extensions for term work:** The deadlines for written work must be strictly observed. If you need an extension beyond the due date for any piece of work, you must apply **in writing** to me **before the due date**, stating your reasons for needing an extension, providing supporting documentation if possible. Work submitted with an extension will be graded in the normal way.

**Late work submitted without an extension** will be counted, but **only if received within three weeks** of the due date: for **Essay 1**, by Tuesday, 7 October, and for **Essay 2**, by 31 October. You will be penalised by having your grade lowered one step (for example, B+ to B), and one additional step for every additional week of lateness (that is, an essay which is between one and two weeks late will be lowered two steps). Comments on late work will be minimal. The University does not permit us to accept work after the end of the examination period, and students who cannot complete their work by this date for medical or similar reasons should consult the aegrotat provisions in the *Calendar*.

**Workload:** You may expect to spend a minimum of 15 hours per week on this course (including the time spent in class). As in any course with a language component, good work habits are essential. With a consistent 2 hours per day of work outside class hours, most students (even those with no previous background in language study) should have no difficulty coming to terms with the grammar, vocabulary, and translation. The time commitment is likely to be greatest in the weeks immediately prior to tests and essay submission dates.

**Mandatory course requirements:** The minimum course requirements which must be satisfied include completion of all internal assessment as detailed above and a minimum of **70%** attendance (that is, 34 out of 48 classes).

## **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means no cheating. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

### **General University Statutes and Policies**

A copy of the General University Statutes and Policies can be found on Blackboard.

## ENGL 215 Old English Literature: Course Content and Schedule

1	July	M	7	Introduction	
		T	8	Introductory grammar	
		Th	10	“	
		F	11	“	
2		M	14	“	
		T	15	“	
		Th	17	“	
3		F	18	“	And beginning <i>The Life of St Edmund</i>
		M	21	“	“
		T	22	“	“
		Th	24	“	“
4		F	25	<i>The Life of St Edmund</i>	
		M	28	“	
		T	29	“	
		Th	31	“	
5	August	F	1	“	
		M	4	“	
		T	5	“	
		Th	7	“	
6		F	8	Introduction to poetry	
		M	11	<i>The Battle of Maldon</i>	
		T	12	“	
		Th	14	“	
7	Sept	F	15	<b>PROSE TRANSLATION TEST</b>	<b>(Mid-term break begins)</b>
		M	1	<i>The Battle of Maldon</i> (continued)	
		T	2	“	
		Th	4	“	
8		F	5	“	
		M	8	“	
		T	9	<i>Deor</i> and scansion	
		Th	11	“	
9		F	12	<i>The Dream of the Rood</i>	
		M	15	“	
		T	16	Anglo-Saxon art	<b>FIRST ESSAY DUE</b>
		Th	18	<i>The Dream of the Rood</i> (continued)	
10		F	19	“	
		M	22	“	
		T	23	<i>The Wanderer</i>	
		Th	25	“	
11		F	26	“	
		M	29	“	
		T	30	“	
12	Oct	Th	2	<i>Wulf and Eadwacer</i> and <i>The Seafarer</i> (in translation)	
		F	3	“	
12		M	6	Revision	
		T	7	<b>POETRY TEST</b>	
		Th-F	9-10	Wrapping up and Sutton Hoo	<b>SECOND ESSAY DUE 15/10</b>