

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL*3570	Course Title: Chaucer the Scientist	Semester and Year of Offering: W25
----------------------------------	---	--

Course Instructor: Aylin Malcolm	Course Format: Lecture
--	----------------------------------

Brief Course Synopsis:

Geoffrey Chaucer died in 1400, leaving his most famous work, the *Canterbury Tales*, incomplete. Over the next few centuries, this former wool merchant came to be seen as one of the most important writers of English literary history. But Chaucer might have been surprised by his later reception, since he was not hailed as a literary genius during his life. In this course, we will approach Chaucer on his own terms – not as an isolated genius, but as a member of writing communities in and beyond England, a bureaucrat concerned with his public reputation, and – especially – a science enthusiast. We will read a Chaucer’s poetry and prose in relation to medieval ideas about the natural world, including astronomy, medicine, and animals. We will compare Chaucer to other medieval English writers to develop an understanding of his literary context. Students will also gain experience with reading Middle English and are expected to work on their language skills throughout the semester. No prior knowledge of this material is expected.

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

<i>Component</i>	<i>Weight (%)</i>
Translation assignments (2)	30
Midterm exam	20
Analytical essay	25
Final exam	25

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.):

The Riverside Chaucer, ed. Benson
Other materials posted on Courselink

Information about mode of delivery:

In person

Final Exam information:

In person, essay-based