Fall 8-15-2010

ENG 5001-001: Chaucer: Current Approaches

David Raybin
Eastern Illinois University

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English 5001.001: Chaucer: Current Approaches
Fall 2010

Instructor: David Raybin
Office: 3761 [324] Coleman Hall
Office Hours: TuW 9:30-11:30 (and by appointment)
Telephone: 581-6980 (office); 330/678-2628 (home, weekends before 8:30)
Electronic Mail: draybin@eiu.edu

Texts: Geoffrey Chaucer, The Riverside Chaucer (ed. Benson)
Fein and Raybin, eds., Chaucer: Contemporary Approaches

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

August 24: Introduction to the course: Reading Chaucer Today
   General Prologue

   31: General Prologue
       “Italy,” CA, pp. 3-24

Sept. 7: Knight’s Tale
       “France,” CA, pp. 25-46
       Response paper #1

   14: Miller’s Tale, Reeve’s Tale, Cook’s Tale
       “England,” CA, pp. 47-64

   21: Man of Law’s Tale
       “Manuscripts and Scribes,” CA, pp. 67-82

   28: Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale
       “Receptions: Medieval, Tudor, Modern,” CA, pp. 83-95
       Response paper #2

Oct. 5: Friar’s Tale, Summoner’s Tale
       “Language in Use,” CA, pp. 99-115

   12: Clerk’s Tale, Merchant’s Tale

   19: Squire’s Tale, Franklin’s Tale
       “Colonialism, Latinity, and Resistance,” CA, pp. 116-31
       Response paper #3

   26: Physician’s Tale, Pardoner’s Tale
       “Humor in Perspective,” CA, pp. 135-58

Nov. 2: Shipman’s Tale, Prioress’s Tale
       “Dream Poems,” CA, pp. 159-78

   9: Tale of Sir Thopas, Tale of Melibee
       “Gender and Sexuality,” CA, pp. 179-98
       Response paper #4

   16: Monk’s Tale, Nun’s Priest’s Tale
       “Literary History,” CA, pp. 199-214
Nov. 21-25: Thanksgiving Holiday

30: Second Nun's Tale, Canon's Yeoman's Tale
   Seminar Paper

Dec. 7: Manciple's Tale, Parson's Tale

14: Oral Presentations of Seminar Papers

Course Description

Chaucer is one of the great poets, those whose language and wide-ranging interests have delighted and instructed readers across many centuries. Each generation, though, has its own Chaucer, as critics respond to his thought and expression according to the tenor of their own time. We will read *The Canterbury Tales* in conjunction with new developments in Chaucer scholarship, exploring both what the poet wrote and how our contemporary moment determines the ideological and aesthetic significance of his poetry.

Requirements: careful reading of the literature and criticism, active participation in discussion, various formal and informal reports and presentations, and a substantial seminar paper.

Course Requirements and Grading

Final grades will be determined on a 100-point scale:

- Response Papers (4 @ 10 pts. each): 40 points
- Seminar Paper: 50 points
- Presentations, Participation, etc.: 10 points

Course Grade: A= 90-100; B= 80-89.99; C= 70-79.99; No Credit= below 70

Response Papers. Papers will be about two pages long and, depending on the reading, will either develop an original idea about the primary text or respond to a critical essay.

Seminar Paper. The paper will be about ten to twelve pages long, and will develop an original idea that shows awareness both of a primary text (or texts) and of current scholarship related to that text.

Presentations. Participants will occasionally direct portions of class and will present their seminar papers in a forum at the close of the semester.

Course/University Policies

Typing. Papers must be typed (double-spaced with one-inch margins). I recommend proofreading twice, and urge you to use a computer if possible.

Honor Policy. I believe education is based on trust. Should you cheat and I find out about it, you can expect to fail the course. The University may take additional action.

Plagiarism. If you use other people's words or ideas without citing your sources and indicating when you have quoted, you risk failing an assignment or even the course depending on how serious I deem the offense. If you are not sure what plagiarism is, or whether a particular use of language is plagiarism, ask me before you turn in an assignment.

Students with Disabilities. “If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.”