
Chesterton, G. K., *Chaucer*, e-text (will be e-mailed to students)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is devoted to the study of Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. We shall read this work in its entirety (time permitting) and attempt to understand it within its historical context, paying particular attention to medieval literary standards and theory, social philosophy, and language. A major critical concern will be the question of unity in *The Canterbury Tales*.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of the semester the student should be capable of reading Chaucer’s Middle English without difficulty, should be familiar with the main critical issues of *The Canterbury Tales*, and should have shown more extensive knowledge of one of the Tales and of the critical problems involved with it.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Work will include two papers: one of these will be a major research project, and the other will be a substantial critical or analytical paper, weekly or bi-weekly reading exercises or quizzes, oral recitation, and a final examination. A student may earn extra credit through performance or other re-creative activities.

EVALUATION: Each project and examination will count for about 28%, and reading exercises, quizzes, and oral recitation about 14%, of the final grade. Attendance, class participation, and initiative will also influence final evaluation: any more than 3 unexcused absences will result in course failure.

READING & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

NOTE: Most reading assignments include a few lines from the Parson’s Tale that serve to comment on aspects of the main reading.

Jan. 18-25 Chesterton  
30-Feb. 6 Prologue (Parson’s Tale, lines 371-386)  
Feb. 8-13 Knight (Pars. 467, 852-3)  
15 Miller, Pars. 379-80, 554-6, 777, 840-1, 895-8  
20 Reeve, Cook (Pars. 379-80, 777, 840-1, 895-8  
22 Man of Law, Pars. 571, 737  
27 Wife of Bath, Pars. 133-5, 407-8, 461, 583-5, 631-4, 916, 932-43, 1043  
March 1 Friar, Summoner Pars. 379-80, 620, 781-4, 910  
6 Clerk, Pars. 461-73  
8 Merchant, Pars. 617, 778-80, 859-60  
20 Squire  
22 Franklin, Pars. 377-9, 444-5, 813, 840-1  
27 Physician, Pars. 162-7, 720  
29 Pardoner, Pars. 216, 591, 603, 781-4, 910  
April 3 Prioress  
5 Sir Thopas  
10 Melibee, Pars. 482  
17 Monk, Pars. 125-6, 202  
19 Nun’s Priest  
24 Second Nun, Pars. 162-7, 571  
26 Canon’s Yeoman  
May 1 Shipman, Pars. 778-80, 840-1, 895-8; Manciple, Pars. 778-80, 840-1, 895-8  
3 Parson

Final Examination: TBA