

Fren 1200: Medieval Epic through the lens of *Game of Thrones*

FA2016 - MWF 1-1.50 Hellems 141

Instructor: Jessica J Appleby

Email: jessica.appleby@colorado.edu

Office: Woodbury 403

Office Hours: by appointment only



Yvain and his lion fight the dragon



Robb and his direwolf confront a different lion (HBO)

Course Description:

The popularity of George RR Martin's fantasy saga *A Song of Ice and Fire* and its Emmy-winning HBO adaptation *Game of Thrones* shows us that major themes from medieval stories still resonate with audiences a thousand years after their composition. This course will examine major epic and romance texts of the Middle Ages such as *Beowulf*, *The Song of Roland*, and *The Death of King Arthur*. We will aim to understand the rich literary tradition that has led to our modern interest in dragons, knights, heroes and magic. We will also look at how representations of medieval culture in contemporary series such as *Game of Thrones* influence our conceptions (and *misconceptions*) of the Middle Ages. Much like Sansa, we will find that the stories do not necessarily reflect the reality.

**Familiarity with either the book series or the television show is recommended for this course.

Taught in English. Approved for Arts and Sciences core curriculum: literature and the arts.

Required Texts:

(available in the CU Bookstore. If you buy them on line, be sure to get the same translation.)

Beowulf (translated by Seamus Heaney) ISBN 978-0-393-32097-8

Arthurian Romances Chrétien de Troyes ISBN 978-0-14-044521-3

The Death of King Arthur (translated by James Cable) ISBN 978-0-14-044255-3

The Song of Roland (translated by Glyn Burgess) ISBN 978-0-14-044532-9

Dante's Inferno (translated by Sandow Birk) ISBN 978-0-811842136

Lais Marie de France (access on-line <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/jshoaf/Marie/>)

“The Hedge Knight” by George R.R. Martin (D2L or in *A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms*)

Course Work and Grades:

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments:

Midterm exams (2)	30%
Reading Quizzes on D2L	15%
Group Presentation	10%
Final Paper/Creative Story	15%
Final Exam	25%
Participation	5%

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance will be taken daily and is mandatory. Each student is allowed **3 absences** for the semester. For every absence over 3, **your final grade will be lowered by 1%**. This is a discussion-based course, so your active participation in class and group work is a necessary part of your success in the course. Any doctors' notes excusing an absence must be presented **WITHIN ONE WEEK** of the absence. If you are texting during class, I will mark you absent for the day.

Participation also includes coming to class prepared with the reading and bringing the current text to class for discussions. I will ask you to reference pages and passages, and you will need your text. I will call on people, so be sure to be prepared every day.

Classroom Respect (because this isn't Westeros):

In order to maintain a positive learning environment, respect and professional courtesy are an essential part of the classroom. Students will not talk over other students or the teacher. It is important that everyone in the classroom be respectful of students' questions and statements so that everyone may contribute to engaging discussions.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationality. Class rosters are provided with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of your preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Spoilers – As the show passed the books, I will consider all 6 seasons and 5 books fair game for class discussion. Much material has been cut from and added to the show, so it's hard to know exactly what constitute spoilers any more. We're all here because we're fans, so please try to be as respectful as possible. However, if you're determined to avoid recent spoilers, this may not be the class for you.

Late Work Policy:

Absolutely no late work will be accepted without **documentation** of a legitimate emergency or medical issue. If you receive accommodations for athletic, religious, or disability reasons, you must notify me the first week of class and all arrangements for make-up work **MUST** be made **in advance**, before the assignment or your absence.

Disability Accommodations:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by email at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Technology Policy:

Absolutely no cell phones in class. They are distracting to me and to your classmates, and they are severely detrimental to your learning. If I see you on your cell phone in class, **I will mark you absent for the day.**

I do NOT allow note-taking on computers or tablets (except for specified accommodations).

University policy states that you must *check your CU email at least once a day*. I will also use D2L to communicate important information and to give you quizzes. Log on regularly.

Technology issues – Having problems with technology is **not** a legitimate excuse for late work. Throughout the semester, you will have reading quizzes on D2L and you will turn in papers through Dropbox on D2L. It is your responsibility to manage your time and complete assignments on time. If you don't know how to use something, you must contact me in advance to sort out the issue. Your future employers will have the same expectations.

Honor Code

Any kind of cheating or plagiarism is absolutely unacceptable and is in direct violation of the CU Honor Code. All CU students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the university's Honor Code. Any violations will be reported to the Honor Code Council and offending students will be subject to sanctions and disciplinary action.

All information about the Honor Code may be found at <http://honorcode.colorado.edu/>

Course Schedule (may be subject to change)

All reading assignments **MUST** be completed before class on the date indicated. This is a literature class, *so you cannot pass the class if you do not keep up with the reading.* (Seriously. Do the reading. I can tell if you haven't.)

You are responsible for checking ALL exam and quiz dates. "I didn't know there was a quiz" is not an excuse for missing one. They **all** take place on D2L. I will not re-open missed quizzes.



Theme: *The dragon has three heads*
Mythical Creatures and Magic

(HBO)

Aug 22 Course introduction	Aug 24 Intro to the Middle Ages and <i>Beowulf</i> p.3-15	Aug 26 <i>Beowulf</i> p.15-47
Aug 29 <i>Beowulf</i> p.47-89	Aug 31 <i>Beowulf</i> p.89-131	Sept 2 <i>Beowulf</i> p.131-163
Sept 5 <i>Labor Day – No Classes</i>	Sept 7 <i>Beowulf</i> p.163-end *reading quiz @ D2L	Sept 9 Epic vs Romance <i>Yvain</i> p.295-311 (end of page)
Sept 12 <i>Yvain</i> p.312-328 (end of page) *reading quiz @ D2L	Sept 14 <i>Yvain</i> p.329-353 (to last paragraph)	Sept 16 <i>Class canceled</i> for instructor conference travel
Sept 19 <i>Yvain</i> p.353 (last paragraph)- 367 (to last paragraph)	Sept 21 <i>Yvain</i> p.367-end	

Midterm #1 (take on D2L between Wednesday 2pm and Thursday 11.59pm)



(HBO)

Theme : Ours is the Fury

War: Foreign and Domestic

		Sept 23 <i>Song of Roland</i> laisses 1-57
Sept 26 <i>Song of Roland</i> l.58-116	Sept 28 <i>Song of Roland</i> l.117-186 *reading quiz @ D2L	Sept 30 <i>Song of Roland</i> l.186-270
Oct 3 <i>Song of Roland</i> l.271-end	Oct 5 <i>Cligès</i> p.123-142	Oct 7 <i>Cligès</i> p.143-154 (→grieving)
Oct 10 <i>Cligès</i> p.154-174 (→spirits) *reading quiz @ D2L	Oct 12 <i>Cligès</i> p.174-192 (→ill)	Oct 14 <i>Cligès</i> p.192-end

Midterm #2 Take on D2L between Friday 2pm and Sunday 11.59pm



(HBO)

Theme: The things I do for love.

Tourneys and Romance

Oct 17 <i>The Hedge Knight</i> p.455-481 or p.4-40 (to “Steely Pate”)	Oct 19 <i>The Hedge Knight</i> p.481-508 or p.40-83 (to “truly?”)	Oct 21 <i>The Hedge Knight</i> p.508-end or 83-end *reading quiz D2L
Oct 24 <i>Erec and Enide</i> p.37-60	Oct 26 <i>Erec and Enide</i> p.60-82	Oct 28 <i>Erec and Enide</i> p.82-101 *reading quiz D2L

Oct 31 (Halloween!!) <i>Erec and Enide</i> p.101-end Marie's prologue (in class)	Nov 2 Marie de France – <i>Lanval</i> , <i>Equitan</i> , <i>Laustic</i>	Nov 4 Marie de France – <i>Chatival</i> , <i>Yonec</i> , <i>Chevrefoil</i>
Nov 7 Marie de France – <i>Bisclavret</i> , <i>Le Fresne</i>	Nov 9 Marie de France – <i>Milun</i> , <i>Lay of Two Lovers</i>	Nov 11 <i>Inferno</i> cantos 1-12 (p.1-74) Intro of final paper



Theme: *What is Dead May Never Die*

(Robert M. Ball)

Death and the Hero: Arthur, Beowulf, Roland

Nov 14 <i>Inferno</i> cantos 13-25 (p.75-156)	Nov 16 <i>Inferno</i> cantos 26-33 (p.157-end) *reading quiz D2L	Nov 18 - <i>No class</i> Paper outline due via email by 5pm <u>no exceptions!</u>
Nov 21 Fall Break – no class	Nov 23 Fall Break – no class	Nov 25 Fall Break – no class
Nov 28 <i>Death of King Arthur</i> p.23-53	Nov 30 <i>Death of King Arthur</i> p.54-96	Dec 2 <i>Death of King Arthur</i> p.96-133
Dec 5 <i>Death of King Arthur</i> p.133-168	Dec 7 <i>Death of King Arthur</i> p.168-203	Dec 9 <i>Death of King Arthur</i> p.203-end Final Paper Due

Final Exam – Monday Dec 12 4:30-7 PM

This exam date is absolutely 100% non-negotiable. Do NOT make plans to leave town earlier than this.