

University of Utah  
ENGL 5700-001  
TuTh 12:25pm – 1.45pm, [HEB 2010](#)  
Spring 2025

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### Studies in Medieval Literature (Old English)



### Course Description

What did English sound like over a thousand years ago? What did its speakers care about, what patterns did they make with words, and what traces of their hopes, desires, fears and anxieties did they leave inked on vellum manuscript for us to read and wonder over a millennium after their anonymous makers vanished? On this course we'll be learning to read some of the earliest surviving poems and prose texts in English in their original language: Old English. We'll encounter heroes and monsters, wandering exiles, ruined landscapes, talking trees and other strange creatures and objects that speak as if human, asking us to name and identify them. We'll study some of the cultural myths and historical patterns by which these earliest English speakers understood their place on the island of Britain in the seventh to eleventh centuries, settlers and immigrants, convinced of the imminence of the coming End Times.

The course is structured so that Tuesday classes are dedicated to study and discussion of literary texts in dual-language versions (original Old English on one side of the page, and a Modern English translation on the other), and Thursday classes are devoted to language study. No previous experience with Old English is required, but students should be aware that unlike many English courses, this one will entail study of grammar, syntax and vocabulary learning. In Thursday language classes emphasis will be on learning by doing, with hands-on exercises, activities and language games. By the end of the course students should be confident enough to read texts in Old English, with minimal reliance on the facing-page translation, and able to translate short passages of Old English for themselves. Assessment will reflect this combination of literary and language work. Writers of Old English were obsessed with what they called *wundor*, 'wonder': that is, the miraculous or marvelous embedded in the mundane and everyday. Come and experience the *wundor* of Old English at first hand!

## Set Texts

– *Old and Middle English c. 890-c. 1450: Anthology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.  
Ed. Elaine Treharne. Oxford; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.  
ISBN: 978-1-4051-8120-4 [Wiley Blackwell Website](#)

– *Reading Old English: A Primer and First Reader*, revised edition.  
Robert Hasenfratz and Thomas Jambeck. Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2011.  
ISBN: 978-1-933202-74-7 [West Virginia Press Website](#)

Please note: you must make sure you obtain the **3rd edition** of Treharne's *Anthology* and the **Revised (2011)** edition of Hasenfratz and Jambeck's *Reading Old English*. Earlier editions do not have all the texts or materials we require for our course. You can order them directly from Wiley and West Virginia University Press where they are currently a little more than \$60 and \$40, respectively. You may find cheaper copies from other online and second-hand retailers; if you do, just be sure that you are purchasing the correct editions. Please note that you will want to write in your books, especially *Reading Old English*, which includes study exercises I will set. So make sure any second-hand copies are 'clean'. We will use the Treharne anthology mainly in our Tuesday classes for literary discussion, and *Reading Old English* in our Thursday classes for language study. We will only be using the first 300 or so pages of the Treharne anthology on this course (and not the Middle English sections), but it still represents the best value for money of any dual-text (i.e. Old English with facing-page Modern English translation) textbook that I can set for this course, and it has everything in it that we will need. While I will recommend other further reading (secondary and critical) from the library, there are no other books necessary for purchase for this course.

## Course Learning Outcomes and Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Read and understand short passages of Old English verse and prose in the original language. *Language Test/Final Translation Test.*
- Analyze, discuss and make arguments about themes, tropes, stylistic devices and historical context of a variety of Old English texts. *Participation/Study Journal/Final Paper*
- Understand and assess the strengths and limitations of scholarly secondary literature on Old English literature. *Critical Secondary Source Review.*

## Assignments and Grading Breakdown

**In-class participation: 10%**

**Language Test: 10%**

**Study Journal: 30%**

**Critical Secondary Source Review: 10%**

**Final Paper: 20%**

**Final Translation Test: 20%**

## Course Grading Scale

A (94-100)	A- (90-93)	B+ (87-89)	B (84-86)	B- (80-83)	C+ (77-79)
C (74-76)	C- (70-73)	D+ (67-69)	D (64-66)	D- (60-63)	E/F (59 or below)

## Course Timetable

*OME* = Treharne, ed., *Old and Middle English c. 890-c.1450, an Anthology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (2010), followed by page numbers. *ROE* = Hasenfratz and Jambeck, *Reading Old English*, revised edition (2011), followed by page numbers.

NB in preparing for each class, please read the Tuesday text from *OME* in advance, as you would for any other English course. You do not normally need to read the sections from *ROE* for the Thursday class in advance; we will work through this material together in class. You will be expected to review and memorize some materials from the Thursday class *after* we have studied together, and it is for this reason that I have listed them here in the course timetable.

### Week 1

Jan 7<sup>th</sup> Course introduction. Introduction to Old English literary culture.

Jan 9<sup>th</sup> Reading Old English aloud. *ROE*, 9-28. Supplemented by class hand-outs.

### Week 2

Jan 14<sup>th</sup> Bede's account of the settlement (*OME*, 2-7) & Borges, 'Hengist Wants Men' (distributed as hand-out).

Jan 16<sup>th</sup> No class. Pronunciation Practice & Hinckley Lecture

### Week 3

Jan 20<sup>th</sup> Bede's account of the poet Caedmon (*OME*, 6-11) & Levertov, 'Caedmon' (distributed as hand-out).

Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> Strong nouns and the definite article. *ROE*, 30-57.

### Week 4

Jan 28<sup>th</sup> *The Wanderer*. *OME*, 54-61.

Jan 30<sup>th</sup> Weak nouns and introduction to verbs (present tense). *ROE*, 60-67, & 70-85.

### Week 5

Feb 4<sup>th</sup> *The Seafarer*. *OME*, 60-67.

Feb 6<sup>th</sup> More on verbs, auxiliaries, 'to be' and 'to have' (present tense) *ROE*, 90-113.

### Week 6

Feb 11<sup>th</sup> *Wulf and Eadwacer* (*OME*, 74-7) and Miller Oberman, 'Wulf and Eadwacer' (distributed as hand-out).

Feb 13<sup>th</sup> Past tense of verbs and difference between strong and weak. *ROE*, 68-9, 74-6, 79-80, & 254-77.

### Week 7

Feb 18<sup>th</sup> Riddles. *OME*, 78-87. (Don't read the headnote! Or it will spoil the game.)

Feb 20<sup>th</sup> Practical translation skills. *ROE*, 116-64.

<b>Week 8</b>	
Feb 25 <sup>th</sup>	<i>The Ruin. OME, 94-9.</i>
Feb 27 <sup>th</sup>	Adjectives, adverbs, prepositions. <i>ROE, 168-214.</i>
<b>Week 9</b>	
Mar 4 <sup>th</sup>	<i>The Battle of Maldon. OME, 155-69.</i>
Mar 6 <sup>th</sup>	Pronouns: personal, reflexive, relative. <i>ROE, 216-52.</i>
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Critical Review of Secondary Source due</b>
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	
Mar 18 <sup>th</sup>	<i>The Fates of the Apostles. OME, 101-7.</i>
Mar 20 <sup>th</sup>	More on strong verbs. <i>ROE, 288-308.</i>
<b>Week 12</b>	
Mar 25 <sup>th</sup>	<i>The Dream of the Rood. OME, 118-27.</i>
Mar 27 <sup>th</sup>	Irregular verbs. <i>ROE, 310-33.</i>
<b>Week 13</b>	
Apr 1 <sup>st</sup>	Visit to Marriott Library, Special Collections.
Apr 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Language Test</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	
Apr 8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Judith. OME, 224-41.</i>
Apr 10 <sup>th</sup>	Contract verbs and impersonal constructions. <i>ROE, 336-55.</i>
<b>Week 15</b>	
Apr 15 <sup>th</sup>	Extracts from <i>Exodus. OME, 243-57.</i>
Apr 17 <sup>th</sup>	Old English translation practice.
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Study Journal Completed</b>
<b>Week 16</b>	
Apr 22 <sup>nd</sup>	‘The First Worcester Fragment’ ( <i>OME, 363-5</i> ) and course conclusion
Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	<b>Final Paper and Final Language Test due</b>

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

[[Mandatory institutional policies can also be found online here.](#)]

### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the [Center for Disability & Access](#) (CDA). CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodation. Prior notice is appreciated. To read the full accommodations policy for the University, see Section Q of the [Instruction & Evaluation regulations](#).

In compliance with ADA requirements, some students may need to record course content. Any recordings of course content are for personal use only, should not be shared, and should never be made publicly available. In addition, recordings must be destroyed at the conclusion of the course.

If you need accommodations in this class, or for more information about support they provide, contact:

#### Center for Disability and Access

801-581-5020

[disability.utah.edu](http://disability.utah.edu)

65 Student Services Building

201 S 1460 E

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

### SAFETY AT THE U

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more safety information and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit [safeu.utah.edu](http://safeu.utah.edu).

To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, contact:

#### Campus Police and Department of Public Safety

801-585-COPS (801-585-2677)

[dps.utah.edu](http://dps.utah.edu)

1735 E. S. Campus Dr.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

### ADDRESSING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status, or genetic information.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to university officials:

#### Title IX Coordinator and Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

801-581-8365

[oeo.utah.edu](http://oeo.utah.edu)

135 Park Building

201 Presidents' Cir.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

**Office of the Dean of Students**

801-581-7066

[deanofstudents.utah.edu](http://deanofstudents.utah.edu)

270 Union Building

200 S. Central Campus Dr.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

To file a police report, contact:

**Campus Police & Department of Public Safety**

801-585-COPS (801-585-2677)

[dps.utah.edu](http://dps.utah.edu)

1735 E. S. Campus Dr.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

If you do not feel comfortable reporting to authorities, the U's Victim-Survivor Advocates provide free, confidential, and trauma-informed support services to students, faculty, and staff who have experienced interpersonal violence.

To privately explore options and resources available to you with an advocate, contact:

**Center for Campus Wellness**

801-581-7776

[wellness.utah.edu](http://wellness.utah.edu)

350 Student Services Building

201 S. 1460 E.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

It is expected that students comply with University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: [Policy 6-410: Student Academic Performance, Academic Conduct, and Professional and Ethical Conduct](#).

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, and/or failure in the course. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code:

“includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.”

For details on plagiarism and other important course conduct issues, see the U's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)