

English 370 Seminar: Introduction to Old English

(Syllabus subject to change)

Spring 2009

Instructor: John Black

Classroom: Collier 200

Class schedule: T 12:50-3:10

Email: jrblack@moravian.edu

Office: Zinzendorf 303

Office Hours: W 5:15-6:15 Th 1:30-2:30,

and by appointment

English Dept. Phone: 861-1390

Required texts and materials:

Baker, Peter S. *Introduction to Old English*. 2nd ed. Maldon, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007.

Campbell, James, ed. *The Anglo-Saxons*. London: Penguin, 1991.

Occasional supplemental readings via Blackboard, photocopy, and reserve.

Films in class, on Blackboard, or on reserve.

Optional text:

Hall, J.R. Clark, ed. *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. 4th ed. Toronto: U of Toronto P (Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching), 1960; reprinted 2008.

Other useful resources:

Refer to "Further Reading" section (Appendix C) in Baker textbook.

Selected websites:

Old English Aerobics: <http://faculty.virginia.edu/OldEnglish/OEA/>

Univ. of Calgary OE website: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/engl401/>

Course Description, Objectives, and Format:

Welcome to English 370! This class introduces students to Old English language and literature (in the original), focusing on selected readings of prose and poetry from the 7th through the 11th centuries. In addition to primary focus on the language and literature, the cultural context of Anglo-Saxon England will be explored through critical essays, histories, and primary texts in translation. On a practical level, our objective will be to gain sufficient familiarity with the grammar, vocabulary, and style of Old English so that we can read (with the help of a dictionary) from the rich and diverse corpus of Old English literature in the original. Learning Old English is also of interest because, while it allows us access to the ideas and culture of a distant past, it at the same time offers keener insights into the subsequent developments in English language and literature, even up to our own day. And, along the way, you'll get to enjoy some great reading on everything from demons to dreamers, saints to scoundrels, warriors to wanderers, despair to desire, and romance to redemption! While short lectures, audio-visual aids, and presentations will often provide some background for our study, our class will consist primarily of translation and discussion: *preparation and participation are, therefore, essential to the success of the class and to your success in it.*

Quizzes, Reading Prompts, Presentations, Portfolios, and Exams:

You'll typically have a short **translation quiz** each week on our Old English reading assignments. Also, for most every class, you'll be responsible for responding to **prompts** for the assigned readings. Make a photocopy to hand in to me at the beginning of class and keep a copy for your use in class and in reviewing for assignments. (Alternatively, you may email me a copy of your responses before class. Be sure to type your name on the document you email to me.) These quizzes and prompts help us keep up with the reading, serve as practice for our course exams, prompt us to think about what we've read, and provide us with a starting point for discussions. There are no make-up exercises; however, I will drop your lowest quiz/short response score. Toward the end of the semester, you'll make one brief individual **oral presentation** on a work selected from the "Further Reading" section (Appendix C) in Baker. At the end of the semester, you'll hand in a portfolio consisting of a mixture of translation assignments, reading notes, and creative pieces.

You'll also take a midterm and a final examination, consisting of translation and short essay. **Your best preparation for both the quizzes and exams is careful, thorough, and thoughtful reading and re-reading. I strongly recommend writing out your parsing and translation work, as well as taking notes on our readings.**

Further details for the presentation, portfolio, and exams will be discussed in advance of the assignments.

Extra Credit: Students may earn up to a total of three points of extra credit to be added at the end of the semester to their lowest assignment grade. Extra credit is earned through confirmed participation in various activities related to literature and writing. For example, a student whose attendance is verified at a MCTC production or at a MC poetry or fiction reading will earn one point for each activity. Attendance at performances and readings at other Lehigh Valley institutions may also be eligible for extra credit. Similarly, any student for whom submission of creative work to *Manuscript* or other literary journal is verified will earn one point. Also, any student for whom a session with the Writing Center is verified will earn one point. Total extra credit may not exceed three points. One hundred points is the maximum possible total for the course.

Attendance and Participation:

Be here: I will take roll regularly. You are expected to attend each day. **Be prompt:** Class begins at 12:50pm sharp. **Be prepared:** Your first responsibility is to read carefully, re-read, and be prepared to discuss, both orally and in writing, all assignments. You should expect to devote several hours to preparing for each class. (A general rule of thumb for college courses is 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour in class.) **Participate:** Classes become more meaningful the more you engage yourself in them. You are expected to make comments or ask questions on the readings and topics each day. I will not hesitate to call on you if you are not contributing. Class time allotted for group work, group discussion, review, etc. is instructional time; you are expected to remain focused on the assigned activity for all of the allotted time.

If you know you will be absent from class, please talk to me beforehand. If you are sick, please notify me as soon as possible. *Your absence from more than two classes may affect your final grade. Every two times you come to class late or leave early without talking to me first will also count as an unexcused absence. Missing more than three classes may result in your failing the course. If you are absent, it is wholly your responsibility to determine what was covered in class and what revisions, if any, were made to the syllabus in your absence.*

Other notes: One of the qualities I expect and appreciate most in students is **personal integrity**. Students who exhibit this quality are ethical and honest, are engaged in class, turn in thoughtful assignments, are responsive to the world beyond themselves, meet deadlines, and keep me informed of any difficulties or successes they have while in my class. Please arrange to go to the restroom before or after class. *Please silence and put away all cell phones, pagers, etc. before coming into the classroom.*

Office Hours: Students are always welcome in my office. My office hours are times that I have set aside specifically to talk with you – not only about class and assignments, but also about life at Moravian, about something fun and exciting you've done, about challenges you're encountering, or whatever. Make use of them. I realize that it may be difficult for you to meet during my posted office hours, so I'm also readily available by appointment: jblack@moravian.edu.

Other Resources:

- With your work on written assignments at Moravian, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the help available through appointment at the Writing Center (2nd fl, Zinzendorf). For more information, visit its website at: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/eng/writingCenter/appointments.htm>
- Similarly, the librarians in Reeves are very resourceful. Make it a habit of consulting with them when research questions arise. The library webpage (<http://home.moravian.edu/public/reeves>) is an excellent resource, offering live online help and research guides.
- The Learning Services Office (1307 Main St., 861-1510) provides many services to help you achieve academic success: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/stusvc/learning/>
- Another important resource that provides help with the demands of college life is The Counseling Center (also at 1307 Main St., 861-1510): <http://home.moravian.edu/public/stusvc/counseling/>
- Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office (1307 Main St., 861-1510) as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism, representing someone else's work as your own, is a serious breach of personal integrity and a significant violation of the College's Academic Honesty Policy: consult the *Student Handbook* or <http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic2.htm>. Read this policy in its entirety. I take the provisions of the Academic Honesty Policy very seriously and am obliged to report any suspected cases of plagiarism, the consequences of which may be failure, suspension, or dismissal from the College. If you plagiarize, you will receive a 'zero' on the plagiarized assignment, which will very likely result in your failure for the course. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism will not be accepted as an excuse. If at any time you have any questions about documenting sources properly (MLA style) or as to whether or not the aid you are receiving is authorized, don't hesitate to ask me. The Reeves Library online research tutorial also addresses the issue: <http://home.moravian.edu/public/reevestutorial/pages/index.htm>

Evaluation: Final grades are calculated on 10-pt. scale: 90=A-, 80=B-, etc. The instructor will apply both quantitative and qualitative assessments in determining grades for assignments and for the course.

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| Midterm exam..... | 25% | Portfolio..... | 10% |
| Final exam..... | 25% | Individual presentation..... | 5% |
| Quizzes..... | 25% | Class participation..... | 10% |

You must complete all requirements in order to pass the course.

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| Jan. | 20 | T | Introduction; syllabus; policies and goals |
| | 27 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 1 Baker: Chpts 1 & 2, Appendix C |
| Feb. | 3 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 2 Baker: Chpts. 3 & 4, Quick Starts and mini-texts 5-7 |
| | 10 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 3 Baker: Chpts. 5 & 6, Appendices A & B, Quick Starts and mini-texts 8-10 |
| | 17 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 4 Baker: Chpt. 7, Quick Starts and mini-texts 11-12, Readings 1 & 2 |
| | 24 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 5 Baker: Chpts. 8, 9, & 10; Reading 3 |
| Mar. | 3 | T | No class – Spring Break |
| | 10 | T | Midterm |
| | 17 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 6 Baker: Chpts. 11 & 12; Readings 4, 5, & 6 |
| | 24 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 7 Baker: Chpt. 13; Readings 7 & 8 |
| | 31 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 8 Baker: Chpt. 14; Readings 9, 10, & 11 |
| Apr. | 7 | T | No class; work time for portfolios and presentations Campbell: Chpt. 9 |
| | 14 | T | Campbell: Chpt. 10 Baker: Chpt. 15; Reading 12 |
| | 21 | T | Baker: Chpt. 16; Readings 13, 14, & 15 |
| | 28 | T | Baker: Readings 16, 17, & 18 Portfolio due Individual presentations on OE resources Wrap-up; final exam review; course evaluation |

The Final Exam is scheduled for Tues. May 5 at 1:30pm in Collier 200. Plan accordingly.