

Fall 2021 ◆ ENGL 306-001 (#66223)
TR 3:30-4:45 ◆ Anderson Graduate School of Management 128
Dr. Obermeier
Arthurian Legends and Romance: Medieval to Modern
Office Hours: M and R 10-12 in HUM 227 or via Zoom, and by Appointment
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Required Texts

- *Lacy, Norris J., and Geoffrey Ashe. *The Arthurian Handbook*. 2nd ed. Garland, 1998. (AH)
- Lacy, Norris J., ed. *The Lancelot-Grail Reader*. Garland, 2000. (CWP)
- *Malory, Sir Thomas. *Le Morte Darthur*. Ed. Helen Cooper. Oxford UP, 2008.
- Mitchison, Naomi. *To the Chapel Perilous*. Green Knight, 1999. On class webpage (CWP)
- Obermeier, Anita, and Gregory Castle. *Guide to Style*. 2021. (CWP)
- Tennyson, Lord Alfred. *Idylls of the King*. (CWP).
- *Twain, Mark. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Penguin, 1971.
- *Wilhelm, James J., ed. *The Romance of Arthur*. Garland, 2013. (RA)

* items you need to buy; the other readings are on the class webpage.

Class webpage: <https://www.anitaobermeier.com/engl306arthurianlegendandromance>

Course Requirements

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|-------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| Oral Group Presentation | worth 15% | Midterm | worth 10% |
| 8-10-page paper/project | worth 25% | Final | worth 20% |
| Written Responses | worth 15% | Class Participation | worth 15% |

Grading is done on a standard 0-100 scale. For grading rubrics and scale, see class webpage, Assignments.

While I do not use Learn for class content, I will post your grades there and run Zoom through it.

Tentative Syllabus

1. Texts are to be read for the day indicated. Any texts that are not books in the list above can be found on the course webpage by clicking on the Week 1, Week 2 tabs, etc.
Bring texts to class.
2. Responses are to be handed in on the day indicated.

Week 1

- T 8.24 Introduction to the Course.
R 8.26 **Origins: The Arthur of the Chronicles**
The Romance of Arthur, Ch. 1: “Arthur in the Latin Chronicles” (1-8)
The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. I: “Origins” (2-23, 29-35).

Week 2

- T 8.31 **Celtic Arthur**
The Romance of Arthur, Chs. 2, 3:
“Arthur in the Early Welsh Tradition” (9-27)
“Culhwch and Olwen” (28-57)
The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. I: “Origins” (23-29).
- R 9.2 **The Arthur of Monmouth**
The Romance of Arthur, Ch. 4, “Arthur in Geoffrey of Monmouth” (58-87)
The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. I: 36-52.
Note: there is a mass of detail in Chs. I and II of *The Arthurian Handbook*—you are not expected to learn all the names, only to understand the major traditions.
- F 9.3 **Email your choice(s) for group presentations to me.**
Last day to add sections, change credit hours or change grading option in LoboWEB.

Week 3

- T 9.7 **Arthur, Gawain, and Mordred**
The Romance of Arthur, Chs. 5, 6, 21:
“Wace, *Roman de Brut*” (88-99)
“Layamon, *Brut*” (100-11)
The Alliterative Morte Arthure (501-3, 520-29; browse through 503-19)
The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (57-67, 122-4).
- R 9.9 **Response 1 Due**
Lancelot and Guinevere
The Alliterative Morte Arthure cont. (529-41)
The Romance of Arthur, Ch. 7:
Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot*, or *The Knight of the Cart* (112-38)
The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (68-71).
- F 9.10 **Last day to drop without a W, add sections, or change credit hours.**

Week 4

- T 9.14 **Lancelot and Guinevere** cont.
The Romance of Arthur: Ch. 7: Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot* (139-80)
Epic/Romance Handout (CWP).

R 9.16

Tristan and Isolde

The Romance of Arthur, Ch. 12:

Bérout, *The Romance of Tristran* (236-81)

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (88-91, 100-3)

Andreas Capellanus: *De Amore* (CWP).

Response 2 Due

Week 5

M 9.20

Arthurian Film Festival in HUM 108, 6:00 pm: Clips from various European Tristan and Isolde films. Feature Film: *Tristan and Isolde* (2006).

T 9.21

Perceval

Thomas of Britain, *Tristan* (CWP)

Chrétien de Troyes, *Perceval*, or *The Story of the Grail*:

Summary (CWP)

“Perceval Prologue”

“Knights”

“Maiden” (CWP)

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (71-76, 92-94).

R 9.23

Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Grail

The Romance of Arthur, Chs. 8 and 9:

Perceval (181-92)

Parzival (193-206)

Parzival Part II (Wolfram) (CWP)

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (76-81, 97-100)

Grail Comparison Chart (CWP).

Response 3 Due

Week 6

T 9.28

Merlin

The Lancelot-Grail Reader:

The Story of Merlin and *The Death of Merlin* (50-92, 415-19 CWP).

Film Response Due

R 9.30

Group Presentations. Instructions on CWP.

F 10.1

Arthurian Round Table Dinner, 6:00 pm. Invitation will be issued.

Week 7

T 10.5

Vulgate Lancelot and the Lady of the Lake

The Lancelot-Grail Reader: Lancelot, Pts. I-II (94-141 CWP)

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (81-88).

Response 4 Due

R 10.7

The Lancelot-Grail Reader: Lancelot, Pts. III, V (142-79, 232-42, 296-304 CWP).

Week 8

T 10.12

Continue *The Lancelot-Grail Reader*. **Midterm Exam Prep.**

R 10.14

Fall Break. Enjoy!

Week 9

T 10.19

Midterm. Blue books are optional, but some form of paper is required.

R 10.21

Vulgate Grail and Galahad

The Lancelot-Grail Reader: The Quest for the Grail (305, 313-363 CWP).

Response 5 Due

Arthurian Film Festival in HUM 108, 6:00 pm: Clips from *First Knight* (1995) and *Mists of Avalon* (2001); Feature Film: *Guinevere* (1994).

Week 10

T 10.26

Group Presentations. Instructions on CWP. **Film Response Due.**

R 10.28

Malory: *Le Morte Darthur* [make sure to use the edition on the syllabus, as other editions will not match this version]

Note on the Text (xiii-xvi)

Caxton's Preface (528-30)

3-81; browse through 95-119

Note: some of this material will be familiar, since Malory is abridging and retelling tales from his sources, many of which you have already read, but we are focusing on what he decides to use, how and why.

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. II (128-33).

Response 6 Due

Week 11

T 11.2

Malory, *Le Morte Darthur* 120-68; 240-309

Heraldry and Color Symbolism Handouts (CWP).

R 11.4

Malory, 310-50, 388-414; browse through 351-87.

Response 7 Due

Week 12

T 11.9

Malory, *Le Morte Darthur* 415-44, 460-505

Knighthood Handout (CWP).

R 11.11

Victorian Masculinities and Femininities

Malory 505-27.

Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott" (CWP)

Idylls of the King, "Dedication" (19-20 CWP)

"Merlin and Vivien" (142-67 CWP)

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. III (152-64).

Response 8 Due

F 11.12

Last day to drop without approval of college dean in LoboWeb.

Week 13

M 11.15

Paper/Project Proposals Due Via Email.

T 11.16

Group Presentations. Instructions on CWP.

W 11.17

Arthurian Film Festival in HUM 108, 6:30 pm: Clips from *Lancelot du Lake* (1974) and *Knight in Camelot* (1998). Feature Film: *Excalibur* (1981).

R 11.18

The American Response

Tennyson cont.: "Guinevere" (269-87 CWP)

"To the Queen" (301-2 CWP)

William Morris, "The Defense of Guinevere" (CWP)
Mark Twain, *Yankee* 29-77
Twain Preface Paragraph (CWP)
The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. III (164-65).

Week 14

T 11.23 Twain, *Yankee* 79-214.

Response 9 Due

11.25 **Thanksgiving Break**

Week 15

T 11.30 Twain, *Yankee* 215-352.

Film Response Due.

R 12.2 **Postmodernism**

Twain, *Yankee* 353-410

Naomi Mitchison, *To the Chapel Perilous* 13-49 (CWP)

The Arthurian Handbook, Ch. III (183).

Week 16

T 12.7 Mitchison, 50-146 (CWP).

Response 10 Due.

R 12.9 Mitchison, 147-218 (CWP).

Review and Final Exam Prep.

Su 12.12 **Term Paper Due by Midnight. Email Submission as a Word Document. If project requires physical drop, Monday 12.13 at 10 am.**

R 12.16 **Final Exam:** 3:00-5:00. Blue books are optional, but some form of paper is required.

Course Objectives

The Arthurian Legend has been the single most prolific and enduring literary motif in Western literature. This course will investigate the enduring strength and attraction of the Arthurian legends from their pan-European beginnings in the medieval period to contemporary literature popular culture, and film. There is no such thing as one "authentic" Arthurian tradition, only competing accounts and reconceptualizations. We will read masterpieces from the Celtic tradition, Chrétien de Troyes, the French Lancelot-Grail Cycle, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Thomas Malory, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Mark Twain, Naomi Mitchison, and others. This way, we can observe how each new version serves a new authorial, political, or cultural agenda—whether it is to establish a national foundation myth, to endorse specific religious values, to revive medieval values in an industrial age, or to challenge gender stereotypes in modern times. We will also focus on the evolution of other important Arthurian characters, such as Gawain, Tristan, Perceval, Morgan le Fay, Galahad, Merlin, Lancelot, and Guinevere. Our guiding question through the course will be "Why Arthur and his companions, particularly? Why *these* figures, *this* narrative, *this* myth?"

Learning Outcomes

At end of the course, students should be able:

- to examine firsthand some of the best Arthurian works throughout time
- to be familiar with the various personages surrounding King Arthur

- to understand the historic time periods of the Arthurian legends and those that perpetuated them
- to explore why the Arthurian legends took hold and how they remain popular
- to gain a sense of the evolution of the themes, how and why they transformed
- to make intertextual connections between the medieval and modern versions of the legends
- to conduct independent research using appropriate methods and tools for Medieval and literary studies to give effective oral presentations
- to write competent analytical response and research papers
- to identify, analyze, and synthesize the acquired knowledge and skills in tests and papers

Course Policies

1. Attendance is mandatory. Since your progress in the course will depend a great deal on what we discuss in class, I expect class attendance and participation (actual contributions to the class discussion). I will pass out attendance sheets, and it is your responsibility to sign the sheets. If the sheet passed you by, come up to the desk and sign at the end of class. Half of your participation grade is based on attendance. Every missed class will drop your participation grade 3 points. **Note:** While you are welcome to check with me on what you have missed, I cannot “re-teach” material you missed during my office hours or over email. Please consult the weekly resources documents on the class website. Due to Covid-19, I will look at attendance more holistically. The course will be recorded as well and made available upon request.

2. The Term Paper must conform to the presentational guidelines set forth in the *Guide to Style* or the *MLA* and be submitted on time. The paper should represent your best effort and will be graded accordingly. Please note that I encourage you to discuss topics, outlines, and rough drafts with me during my office hours or via email. The paper assignment sheet is on the class webpage.

3. Tests are closed book and emphasize detail knowledge through ids, analysis and close reading through passage ids, and synthesis abilities through essay questions.

4. Written Responses: You are expected to write a 1-page (250-word) response for each session indicated, discussing the readings for that day or since your last response. These responses should be informal, journal-like **typed** pieces, expressing your thoughts and reactions to the text, and turned in to me in hard copy. They also help me see where an entire class might be lost, or what you are particularly interested in. In the past, I have really enjoyed reading about your thoughts; I get the feeling that I am sharing your experience. Do not be afraid to express puzzlement and unfamiliarity, or even delight and interest. I am interested in your untutored, uncritical reactions to the text. We will leave more structured and analytical writing for the formal paper. Submit your responses **either** in hard copy in class **or** on the blog for our course **before** class on the days indicated on the syllabus: <https://www.anitaobermeier.com/forum/arthurian-legends-romance>. I will return the read responses to you.

If you need some guidance, analyze why you think certain characters, themes, developments, motifs, etc. are significant. What do they mean in the context and culture they are used? A sample response paper is on the class webpage under Assignments.

5. Class Discussion and Participation: One of my teaching philosophies is student ownership of text along with critical thinking. In order to facilitate good class discussion and involvement of all students, I have devised several short individual and small group warm-up exercises trying to cull

out the significance of each text. It is not enough to retell “the story,” although sometimes things might be confusing and clarification is necessary. The emphasis is on analysis.

6. Group Presentations: Please look at the instructions on the class webpage and email me your choices by **9.3.2021**. We will then look at them together to determine groups.

7. Arthurian Film Festival: Since we are in the current circumstances and some of you might not be comfortable attending, attendance at the movie nights and writing a 1-page response paper for each film night you attend will be counted as extra credit. It should be fun, and there will be dinner-type food and refreshments. You may bring guests as long as they adhere to UNM’s Covid requirements. If circumstances worsen, we will not hold the movie nights.

8. Assignments: Students must attempt **all** assignments to pass the course; hence you cannot, for instance, skip the final. There will extra credit opportunities for attending lectures with medieval topics, etc. 5 points on 5% of the overall grade.

9. Mask Requirement: All students, staff, and instructors are required to wear face masks in indoor classes, labs, studios and meetings on UNM campuses, see [masking requirement](#). Students who do not wear a mask indoors on UNM campuses can expect to be asked to leave the classroom and to be dropped from a class if failure to wear a mask occurs more than once in that class. With the exception of the limited cases described above, students and employees who do not wear a mask in classrooms and other indoor public spaces on UNM campuses are subject to disciplinary actions.

A two-layer mask that covers the nose and mouth and that is cleaned regularly is acceptable, as are disposable medical masks, KN95, KF94, FFP1 and FFP2 masks. A face shield is not sufficient protection. It is vital that you wear your mask correctly, covering your nose and mouth. Removing your mask for an extended period to eat or drink in class violates the university mask requirement and endangers others. I will have masks on hand if someone needs one.

10. Etiquette: No cell phone use or texting in this class. Turn your phones off. When we meet over Zoom, please be courteous and present to the class. It is evident when people are doing something else while on Zoom. We live in trying times; let’s be kind to one another.

11. Doing the Right Thing: UNM has policies to preserve and protect you and the academic community available in the [Student Pathfinder](#) as well as in the Faculty Handbook. These include policies on student grievances [D175](#) (undergraduates) and [D176](#) (graduate and professional students), academic dishonesty ([D100](#)), and respectful campus ([CO9](#)). Please ask for help in understanding and avoiding **plagiarism** (passing the work or words of others off as your own work or words) or other forms academic dishonesty. **For clarification, see #102-107 in the *Guide to Style*.** Doing something dishonest in a class or on an assignment can lead to serious academic consequences. Come talk with me about your concerns or needs for academic flexibility or talk with support staff at one of our [student resource centers](#) before you do something that may endanger your career.

12. Credit Hour Statement: This is a three credit-hour course. Class meets for two 75-minute sessions of direct instruction for sixteen weeks during the Fall 2021 semester. Students are expected to complete a *minimum* of six hours of out-of-class work (or homework, study, assignment completion, and class preparation) each week.

13. Accommodation Statement: In accordance with University Policy 2310 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as I am not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow. Contact [Accessibility Resource Center](#) at 277-3506 or arcsrvs@unm.edu for additional information.

UNM is committed to providing courses that are inclusive and accessible for all participants. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an accessible classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity. If you are experiencing physical or academic barriers, or concerns related to mental health, physical health and/or COVID-19, please consult with me after class, via email/phone or during office hours. You are also encouraged to contact [Accessibility Resource Center](#) at arcsrvs@unm.edu or by phone 277-3506.

14. Support in Receiving Help: Students who ask for help are successful students. I encourage students to be familiar with services and policies that can help them navigate UNM successfully. Many services exist to help you succeed academically, such as [peer tutoring](#) at CAPS and <http://mentalhealth.unm.edu>. There are plenty of ways to find your place and your pack at UNM: see the "student guide" tab on my.unm, students.unm.edu, or ask me for information about the right resource center or person to contact.

15. The English Department affirms its commitment to the joint responsibility of instructors and students to foster and maintain a positive learning environment.

16. Title IX: Our classroom and our university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. Should you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access the resources available to you on campus, especially the LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center and the support services listed on its website (<http://loborespect.unm.edu/>).

17. Citizenship and/or Immigration Status: All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. As for all students in the class, family emergency-related absences are normally excused with reasonable notice to the professor, as noted in the attendance guidelines above. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration's welcome is found on our website: <http://undocumented.unm.edu/>.

18. Land Acknowledgement: Founded in 1889, the University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.