

# ENGL 361 | Reading Medieval Manuscripts

Prof. Myra Seaman | Spring 2016

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### **CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION [15% of course grade]**

10% for daily in-class participation [including required meeting]

5% for daily in-class writing

Attendance is vital to your success a class such as this one, since classroom discussion will be our opportunity to “do something” with the texts you read. Class discussion should come as a reward for doing the preparation before class and for being present. You should expect to participate in an active and engaged classroom experience, twice a week. Make sure you are in class, ready to begin discussion, when class is scheduled to start. Because I take roll at the very beginning of class, tardiness gets recorded as absence unless you approach me after class to confirm your attendance.

I know, however, that there may come a time when you will need to miss class. My compromise: you are granted three absences for the semester, no questions asked (which means I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences). Beginning with your

4th absence, you sacrifice 5% of your course grade—that is, one half of a letter grade—*per absence*. Any time you miss a class, you are responsible for that day's work, including understanding assignments and getting the gist of class discussion. Needless to say, if you're not in class, whatever the reason, you're not accruing participation points, and you're missing out on in-class writing.

Before coming to class each day, you should do the following. Each step is necessary.

- **Read** the assigned material listed on the schedule, including any introductory material.
- **Respond:** Spend time developing your own sense of what you have read, by looking back over it once you've finished the reading, and considering what you might say about the text. A good way to do this is by writing a spontaneous blog post ([see details below](#)). You'll need to do that on average once a week, before class, though you choose which particular days of class you'd like to write a post for.
- **Contribute to the class hive mind:** Check the hive mind wiki page on the blog to post a question or see if someone else has posted a question you can help answer. I recommend posting a question or answer every other week or so, to ensure you're participating fully ([see details below](#)).
- **Prepare for textual engagement in class:** Bring to class the book(s) from which you did the day's reading. These should be marked up, to record the experience of your reading so you can call on that when you're in class discussion. [Special note: If you're using an electronic copy of the Broadview text, let me know early in the semester, so I'll anticipate that you'll be using a laptop or tablet in class (a tablet is my preference, since it doesn't put a visual wall between you and the rest of the class). Also, be prepared for me to be concerned that you're not being distracted by things other than the Broadview, on your screen.]
- **Prepare to write in class:** [Be ready to write for 7 minutes](#) at the start of class. Preparation should be mental and physical, with pen and paper or, alternatively, with a laptop or tablet from which you can submit your response to me immediately on OAKS.

**In-class writing:** At the start of each class, you will perform informal writing in response to a question I will present on the day's assigned reading. You will have 7 minutes to respond to the question. Your main goal will be to call on your recollection of the reading (these will not be open-book) to respond directly and specifically, demonstrating your understanding of what you read. These daily writings will get your thoughts flowing for the day's classroom discussion. While the weekly meet-up (see below) encourages discussion *outside of class*, the *in-class writing* is aimed at prompting discussion *in class*.

If you'd like to improve the quality of your responses (and of your grade), please see me during office hours for personal assistance.

**Required meeting:** Many of you will find yourselves coming to meet with me regularly outside of class, but for those of you who wouldn't automatically do so, I require an out-of-class

meeting early in the semester so you can discover how painless and even enjoyable it is. It also ensures that you know where my office actually is. To fulfill this requirement, you will need to meet with me by the end of the last day of January. This meeting is informal and has no specific content. Simply show up and chat with me for 10-15 minutes. This can happen during my office hours, when you can simply drop in as suits your schedule (office hours: TR 1:30-2:30). If my office hours clash with your schedule, then you'll need to email me to arrange an alternative meeting time. Consider this meeting a substitute for the days we don't have class on Jan 7 and Mar 31.

### **WEEKLY SALON [15% of course grade]**

Once every week, outside of class time (and at a regular time each week), you will meet with 3 other students (the same 3 students). This weekly meet-up will be a time for you to work together, informally, without a specific project or assignment. I will provide some possible discussion topics, but I'm happiest when a group determines its own topics for that week—which can be generated organically through informal discussion. You might want to meet at Kudu or Caviar & Bananas, or at a regular spot in the library, or whatever you all decide on. Each week, someone should take some general notes about what you discuss. This note-taking role can rotate, so no one person does the majority of the work of the group.

After each week's meeting, your group will submit an informal report on your convocation for that week. This can be a written text, an audio recording, a video, whatever you'd like it to be. This should be submitted to the dropbox in OAKS for that week. So long as you were present at that week's salon, you will receive full credit for it.

By Monday, Jan 11 at midnight, you will let me know two windows ([using this online form](#)), each of them at least 2 hours in length (though the salon itself needs to be only 30 minutes), that you have available each week for your salon. I will then organize the groups based on schedule availability. Once I've done that, you'll meet up in class a first time, and exchange contact info, and get started!

### **SPONTANEOUS BLOGGING + HIVE MIND CONTRIBUTIONS [5% of course grade]**

#### **Spontaneous blogging:**

Over the course of the 14-week semester, you will need to post to the blog at least 10 times. 5 of these will need to be posted before the midterm exam (that is, before Feb 23), with another 5 being required after the midterm. [I'll regularly give reminders in class and via email.] You may, of course, post more frequently, but this is the minimum level of participation required.

Whenever you feel so moved, you should write a post on the course blog BEFORE coming to class, pertaining to the reading assigned for that day. These responses should be at least 200

words.

To receive credit, your post:

- (1) must not repeat what someone has already said and
- (2) must make at least one specific response to the reading on which the question is based: a quote of at least 2 words but no more than a single sentence, with the line number (for a poem) or page number (for anything not a poem) listed in parentheses afterwards.

(For some help with the logistics of posting on the course blog, see [Get Blogging!](#))

### **Hive mind contribution:**

This is a space for students to present observations to and ask questions of one another, informally and regarding the concerns of the course more loosely than do the blog posts. While blog posts should concern the readings for that particular class meeting, and should be analytical and make specific reference to material in the readings, hive mind contributions have no such restrictions. Ask questions, answer others' questions, and present your own thoughts on anything that relate (even if only obliquely) to the course readings and discussions. See the [hive mind itself](#) for further info.

You should aim to contribute to the hive mind as frequently as you make a more formal post to the blog (that is, almost once a week).

### **CRITICAL WRITING [35% of course grade]**

10% for project 1

1% for project 1 proposal

2% for project 1 draft

19% for project 2

1% for project 2 proposal

2% for project 2 draft

The critical writing projects are different from the informal blog writing or the in-class writing, both of which occur before class discussion. In each critical writing project, you will present your ideas in much more depth, and with much more forethought, and they will involve peer review and revision. I will grade these critical writing projects in terms of grammar, style, and structure as well as in terms of analytical content and how they engage with the materials and ideas of the course. I'm always happy to discuss your ideas and implementation with you, so please make use of my office hours (and, of course, the Writing Lab).

Since the deadlines for formal written work are so clearly spelled out on the syllabus, late

projects will not be accepted except in very extraordinary circumstances. Due dates for the critical writing projects are days when our class does not meet; these papers will be due at 5am, in OAKS, on the indicated date.

### **EXAMS [35% of course grade]**

You will take two exams—a midterm (15%), and a final (20%, part of which will be cumulative). I will provide exam structure guides and study guides for each exam.

### **RESOURCES**

Office hours are reserved for you to drop in as suits your schedule, to discuss your writing and/or the course: TR 1:30-2:30. Should that not suit your schedule, please email me to arrange an alternative time. Emailing is the most efficient way to communicate with me outside of class; I would discourage contacting me by phone except during office hours.

[The Writing Lab](#) is located on the first floor of Addlestone Library, within the Center for Student Learning. Here you will find many resources for your writing (for this and other classes): handouts, reference books, sample bibliographies, and consultants who have been trained to assist you in generating materials for your essay, organizing your ideas and materials, revising and editing your writing, and any step in the writing process. You can find information, including hours and schedule, at the link above.

Academic accommodation for a documented disability can be arranged through the [Center for Disability Services](#): 843-953-1431, Lightsey Center, Suite 104. If you are approved for accommodations, you should let me know as soon as possible so we can organize appropriate arrangements.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All students, needless to say, must follow the College of Charleston's academic integrity policy, which forbids cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism. Any case of suspected cheating or plagiarism (on any written response for the course) will be sent to the College's Honor Board, and any student found guilty will receive a grade of XF, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty.

"Recycled" papers written for other courses are not acceptable in this class.

College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity, from the [Student Handbook](#):

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

## GRADING SCALE

A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	84-86	3.0
B-	80-83	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	74-76	2.0
C-	70-73	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
D-	60-63	0.7
F	0-59	0.0

