

**The Middle Ages  
1150-1499  
Fall, 2013**

**Comp. Lit. 164 A/COM 220**  
**Instructor: Brenda Deen Schildgen**

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**Office Hours:**

T. 3:15-4:15; R. 12:15-1:15

Class Meets TR 4:40-6PM

Wellman 230

Focusing on the formal development of medieval literary genres as the foundation for “modern” literary forms, this course discusses the major topics, themes, and conventions (love, God, vision, nature, history, war, politics, sign theory, the demise of the courtier class and the rise of a money economy) of the period. While focusing on specific genre inventions of the medieval period, the course also explores the medieval mixture of philosophical, religious, and literary traditions, particularly the intermingling of Islamic, ancient Greco-Roman, Hellenistic-Hebraic roots and medieval Christian civilization and how these syntheses appear in the literary work of the period

Texts:

**The Letters of Abelard and Heloise** (Penguin)

Giovanni Boccaccio, **The Decameron** (Penguin)

**The Lais of Marie de France** (Penguin)

**Arthurian Romances of Chretien de Troyes** (Penguin)

**The Celestina**, trans. Lesley Byrd Simpson (University of California Press)

Geoffrey Chaucer, **The Canterbury Tales** (Bantam).

Christine de Pizan, **The Book of the City of Ladies**, trans. Earl Jeffrey Richards (Persea Books)

Dante, **Vita Nuova** (New Life) (Penguin)

**Requirements:** 3 five page papers (90%), one of which is a take-home final exam due on the day of the final (Friday March 16, at 6PM [30%]). You may submit the final paper on line at [bdschildgen@ucdavis.edu](mailto:bdschildgen@ucdavis.edu) (by attachment with your name on the file). Since I want to conduct this class more like a seminar than a lecture course, classroom participation is a significant part of the grade (10%), so you are expected to come to class ready to discuss the works assigned. All students will be expected to lead one discussion during the quarter.

For graduate students: a graduate seminar paper.

**R Sept. 26** Introduction: Digital slides/MAPS

<http://www.euratlas.com>

**Oct. 1** “Historia calamitatum,” in Letters of Abelard and Heloise (57-106).

**Oct. 3** Marie de France, “Prologue,” “Guigemar,” “Le Fresne,” “Bisclavret,” “Lanval,” Yonec,” “Le Laustic.”

**Oct. 8-15** Arthurian Romances (Yvain) (3 classes)

**Oct. 17** Dante, Vita Nuova

**Oct. 22** **First paper due.**

**Oct. 24** Boccaccio, Decameron, Preface, Introduction. Day I: 1, 2, 3.

**Oct. 29** Day 2:3,6,7,8; Introd. to Day 3, 3:1,8,10, and conclusion.

**Oct. 31** Day 4: Introduction; Day 4:1,5,7.

**Nov. 5** Decameron, Day 5: 7,8,9; Day 7: 2,3,10; Day 9:2,3,4, and 9.

**Nov. 7** Decameron, Day 10: 3,9, and 10.

**Nov. 12** Digital slides/Late Middle Ages

**Nov. 14** Chaucer, Canterbury Tales, The Prologue, “The Knight’s Tale.”

**Nov. 19** “The Knight’s Tale.”

**Nov. 21** Christine de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies.

**Nov. 26** Christine de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies.

**Second Paper Due**

**Nov. 28** **Thanksgiving**

**Dec. 3** The Celestina

**Dec. 5** The Celestina

**FINAL EXAM:** December 11, 8 AM. Your paper is due to me via e-mail attachment, with your name on the file by 10 AM December 11.

Medieval Web Sites:

[www.medievalmapsonline.com](http://www.medievalmapsonline.com)

Medieval Source Book: [www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.asp)

Also, the Dante Society of America has much material related to both Dante and to ([www.dantesociety.org](http://www.dantesociety.org)) the Middle Ages.