Medieval Literature Reading List

Old English

Students concentrating in the early medieval period will be expected to read Old English texts in the original; others, in consultation with their committee, may read them in translation, using anthologies such as S. A. J. Bradley, *Old English Poetry*, M. Swanton, *Anglo-Saxon Prose*, and K. Crossley-Holland, *The Anglo-Saxon World*.

**Poetry**

1. *The Battle of Brunanburh*
2. *The Battle of Finnsburg*
3. *The Battle of Maldon*
4. *Beowulf*
5. *Cædmon’s Hymn*
6. *The Dream of the Rood*
7. *Elene*
8. Exeter Book Elegies
   - The Wanderer
   - The Seafarer
   - The Wife’s Lament
   - Deor
   - The Ruin
   - Riddles
9. Exeter Book
10. *Exodus*
11. *Guthlac A and B*
12. *Judith*

**Prose**

1. *Ælfric*
   - selected homilies and saints’ lives, including “Sermon on the Sacrifice on Easter Day,” “On the False Gods,” Lives of St. Edmund, St. Æthethryth, St. Swithun; Preface to *Genesis*
2. *Alfred*
   - Prefaces to Gregory’s *Pastoral Care*
   - Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*
3. *Anglo-Saxon*
   - *Chronicle*
4. *Bede*
   - *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*
5. selected homilies from the Vercelli and Blickling MSS
6. selections of early English law codes (e.g., Æthelberht, Alfred, Cnut)
7. *Wulfstan*
   - *Sermon of ‘Wolf’ to the English*
**Middle English**

1. selections from *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Katherine* Group (tr. B. Millet and J. Wogan-Browne)
2. *The Owl and the Nightingale*
3. selections from Layamon, *Brut*
4. selected Middle English romances (e.g. those in *Middle English Romances*, ed. S. Shepherd [New York: Norton, 1995]) including the lyrics of Harley 2253 (ed. G. L. Brook) and a selection of others (e.g. *Middle English Lyrics*, ed. Luria and Hoffman [Norton, 1974])
5. selected Middle English short poems, including *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*
6. *Canterbury Tales*
7. *Troilus and Criseyde*
8. *Book of the Duchess*
9. *House of Fame, Legend of Good Women*
10. *Parlement of Fowles*
11. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
12. *Pearl*
13. *Patience*
14. *Cleanness*
15. *Saint Erkenwald*
8. Langland *Piers Plowman* (either B-text or C-text)
9. Gower selections from *Confessio Amantis*
10. Malory selections from *Morte Darthur* (including Books VI, VII, XIII-XXI as divided by Caxton)
11. Alliterative *Morte Arthure*
13. *The Cloud of Unknowing*
15. selected York Mystery Plays (e.g., those ed. Richard Beadle and Pamela King [Oxford, 1999])
16. Wakefield Master Plays including *The Second Shepherd’s Play Everyman*

**Intellectual and Cultural Background** (may be read in translation)

1. Alain de Lille *De planctu naturae*
3. Andreas Capellanus *De amore*
5. Augustine *Confessions, On Christian Doctrine*
6. Boccaccio
   Decameron
7. Boethius
   Consolation of Philosophy
   Chanson de Roland
8. Chrétien de Troyes
   Erec, Yvain, Lancelot, Perceval
9. Christine de Pizan
   The Book of the City of Ladies
10. Dante
    Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso, Vita nuova
11. Geoffrey of Monmouth
    History of the Kings of Britain
12. Geoffrey of Vinsauf
    Poetria nova
13. Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun
    Roman de la Rose
14. Marie de France
    Lais
15. Ovid
    Meditations on the Life of Christ tr. Francis X. Taney, A. Miller and M. Stallings-Taney)
    Metamorphoses
16. selections on medieval literary theory by Aquinas, Dante, Boccaccio in the Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, ed. V. Leitch