

**Department of English**  
**Suggested Readings for the Comprehensive Examination**  
***In Medieval Literature and Language***

(Revised April 2004)

The Medieval Section's Comprehensive Examination on medieval literature and language is intended to evaluate your expertise as a professional in medieval studies. Its content does not reflect coursework, but rather demands that the examinee be familiar with the primary texts and current and developing issues in the scholarship. The following is a list of primary authors, works, and a selection of relevant secondary materials, designed to represent the broad concerns of the field. Although exhaustive knowledge is expected in some areas, the examinee should be able to write and converse as a professional in all areas. Our hope is that the student who has mastered these works and can speak and write fluently and cogently about them will do well on the medieval examination.

**Contextual European and Latin Texts** (To be read in translation)

Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy*  
 St. Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*; Selections from *City of God*; *On Christian Doctrine*  
 Boccaccio, *Decameron*  
 Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*  
 Andreas Capellanus, *On Courtly Love*  
 Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Romance of the Rose*. Trans. Dahlberg.  
 Marie de France, *Lais*  
 Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*

**Old English – Primary Texts**

Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*  
 The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles (compare versions)  
 Riddles  
 Wulfstan, *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*  
 Ælfric: selections from *Homilies* and *Catholic Homilies, Lives of the Saints, Colloquy on the Occupations*  
 Anonymous homilies (Blickling or Vercelli)  
 Alfred's translation and preface of Pope Gregory's "Pastoral Care"  
*Beowulf*. Howell D. Chickering, Jr., Trans. Dual Language Edition. New York: Doubleday, 1977.  
 Compare with Liuzza (2000) and Heaney (2000).  
*Dream of the Rood*  
*Judith*  
*Battle of Maldon*  
*The Wanderer*  
*The Seafarer*  
*The Ruin*  
*Genesis A and B*  
*Exodus*  
*Juliana*

**Old English – Secondary Works**

Baker, *Beowulf: Basic Readings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2000 (?).  
 Bjork and Niles, eds. *A Beowulf Handbook*, 1997.  
 Frantzen, ed. *Speaking Two Languages*, 1991.  
 Golden, Malcom and Michael Lapidge, eds. *Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, 1998.  
 See also Pulsiano and Treharne, eds. *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, 2001.  
 Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England*, 1989.

Kiernan, *Beowulf and the Beowulf Manuscript*, 1981  
 Lees, *Regarding Men: Medieval Masculinities*, 1994.  
 Lerer, *Literacy and Power in Anglo-Saxon England*, 1991.  
 Liuzza, ed. *Old English Literature: Critical Essays*, 2002.  
 O'Keefe, ed. *Reading Old English Texts*, 1997.  
 O'Keefe, *Old English Shorter Poems*, 1994.  
 Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," *PBA* 22 (1936): 245-95 (and in many anthologies).

### **Middle English – Primary Texts**

King Horn  
 Havelock the Dane  
 Sir Orfeo  
 Harley Lyrics, selected  
*Wynnere and Wastour*  
*Parlement of the Thre Ages*  
*Ancrene Riwe*  
*The Book of Margery Kempe*. Ed. Barry Windeatt  
 Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*  
 The "Katherine Group"  
*Mandeville's Travels*. Ed. M. C. Seymour  
*Middle English Political Writings*. Ed. James M. Dean  
*Piers Plowman*, William Langland, B-text Ed. A.V.C. Schmidt  
 Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*  
*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, *Patience*  
 Thomas Malory, *Morte D'arthur*  
 John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*  
 John Lydgate, selected verse  
 Thomas Hoccleve, selected verse  
 Robert Henryson, *The Testament of Cresseid*

### **Middle English – Drama**

Selections from Wakefield Master, Chester and York cycles  
*The Croxton Play of the Sacrament*  
*Everyman*, *Mankind*  
*Medieval Drama*, Ed. Bevington, Latin church drama  
*The Treatise of Miraclis Pleyinge*. Ed. Clifford Davidson (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 1993)

### **Middle English – Secondary Works**

Aers, *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity*, 1988.  
 Boitani, *Chaucer and the Italian Trecento*, 1983  
 Burrow, *Ricardian Poetry*, 1971.  
 Bynum, Caroline. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, 1987  
 Dinshaw, Carolyn. *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics*  
 Donaldson E. Talbot, *Speaking of Chaucer*  
 Dronke, Peter, *Medieval Lyric*, 1968  
 Hanawalt, Barbara A, *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, 1994.  
 Howard, Donald R., *The Idea of the Canterbury Tales*, 1976.  
 Kolve, D., *Play Called Corpus Christi*, 1966  
 Lewis, C.S., *The Discarded Image*, 1964.  
 Mann, Jill, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire*, 1973.

- Minnis, Alastair, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 1988.
- Patterson, Lee, *Negotiating the Past*, 1987; *Chaucer and the Subject of History*, 1991.
- Robertson, D.W., *A Preface to Chaucer*
- Strohm., Paul. *Theory and the Premodern Text*, 2000; *Hochon's Arrow*, 1992.
- Renevey, Denis and Christiania Whitehead, eds. *Writing Religious Women*, 2000.
- Wallace, David. *Chaucerian Polity*, 1999.