

Fall 2008
229 Education Building

J. Niles
MWF 8:50–9:40

INTRODUCTION TO OLD ENGLISH

English 320: class #17024
= Medieval Studies 320: class #18435

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the Old English language and aspects of Old English literature. The main purpose of the course is to develop a good reading knowledge of Old English, enabling students in subsequent semesters to read *Beowulf* and do more advanced studies in early English language and literature. In addition, students will acquire some knowledge of characteristic themes and genres in Old English literature, including both prose and poetry, and will gain a sense of the culture that produced the texts we read.

REQUIREMENTS

Numerous quizzes and written exercises. Two midterm exams and a final exam. Regular attendance and participation in class are essential, as is daily homework (including the memorization and review of grammatical paradigms, the memorization and review of vocabulary, and additional reading and practice on the course website).

The exams will count for 50% of the final grade. The other 50% of the final grade will be based on other evidence indicating the quality of a student's commitment to the course. Individual progress will be taken into account—so don't panic if you have a hard time at the beginning.

INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT NUMBERS

M 10–11 am, Th 1:30–2:30 pm, and by appointment, 6131 White Hall.
Tel. (608) 265-9836.
Email jdniles@wisc.edu
Web site: <http://www.wisc.edu/english/jdniles/nilesclas.html>

TEXTS

The following two texts are basic to the course and are required for purchase:

- ML** Samuel Moore and Thomas A Knott, *Elements of Old English*, rev. by James R. Hulbert. Out of print; photocopies available at Underground Textbook Exchange, on State St.
- Guide** Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, *Guide to Old English*, 5th, 6th, or 7th edition. Blackwell, paperback. Also at Underground Textbook Exchange.

The following additional text is recommended:

Steven Barney, *Word Hoard: An Introduction to Old English Vocabulary*. Yale, paperback.

In addition, some course materials are mounted on a website:

web <http://www.wisc.edu/english/courses/320/>

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (subject to change):

- W Sept 3 Introduction to the course and to Old English orthography (letter forms and spelling) and pronunciation. Check out the website, esp. ‘How to Succeed’ and the sections under ‘OE Vocabulary.’
- F Sept 5 MK intro. and ch. 1: pronunciation. Practice on ‘Practice Sentences’ (Guide, pp. 163-64). Introduction to inflections. Web: ‘The Case System’ (under Grammar Lessons).
- M Sept 8 MK ch. 2 and ch. 3 through §48: strong masc. and neuter (a-declension) nouns. Memorize the paradigms of **sē stān**, **þæt lim**, **ðæt word**. Web: ‘Heavy and Light Syllables’ and the masc. and neuter parts of ‘Strong Nouns’ (all under Grammar Lessons). Guide, §§188-192: functions of the cases. When you do the translation in MK §45 and other sample translations during the next week, jot down the form (gender, number, and case) and function of each noun.
- W Sept 10 MK ch. 3 (the rest) and ch. 4: strong fem. (o.-decl.) nouns, verb endings. Memorize **sēo ġiefu**, **sēo lār**. Web: ‘Strong Nouns’ (the rest), ‘Weekly Practice’ for week 1, and the first few sample sentences.
- F Sept 12 Quiz 1. MK ch. 5: weak nouns, the verb *to be*. Memorize **sē hunta**, **sēo eorðe**, and **bēon**.
- M Sept 15 MK ch. 6: pronouns, verb endings. Memorize **hē**, **hēo**, **hit**. Reading: Matthew 13:24-30. Guide, §§139-153: intro. to OE syntax, word order.
- W Sept 17 MK ch. 7 and part of 16 (§§127-29): adjectives. Memorize **sum**, **gōd**, **gōda**. Reading: Luke 15:11-19. Guide, §§187: concord. Web: ‘Strong Adjectives’ and Weekly Practice for week 2.
- F Sept 19 Quiz 2. MK chs. 8 & 9 through §86: sound changes, demonstrative *this*. Preparation should include writing out the two little exercises and memorizing **þēs**, **þeos**, **þis**. Reading: Luke 15:20-32.
- M Sept 22 MK chs. 9 (the rest) and 10: additional sound changes (exercise) and pronouns. Memorize **iċ**, **þū**, **wē**, and **ġē**. Web: check for new sentences, Weekly Practice for week 3.
- W Sept 24 MK ch. 21: anomalous verbs, u-declension; memorize the four verbs. Next OE readings: ‘The Fall of Man’ and ‘Abraham and Isaac’ (Guide, texts 2a and 2b). Readings from now on will be assigned, so skip the remaining ones in MK.
- F Sept 26 Review date. MK ch. 15: gemination and i-mutation (two exercises).
- M Sept 29 MK ch. 11 and rest of 16 (§§124-26): strong verbs classes 1 & 2, syncopated present forms.

Memorize at least the principal parts of **bīdan**, **bēodan**, and **brūcan**, and do the exercise in §126. Web: “Strong Verbs” (up to the table).

- W Oct 1 MK ch. 12: strong verbs class 3 (exercise); memorize at least the principal parts of **bindan**, **helpan**.
- F Oct 3 Quiz 3. MK ch. 13: strong verbs class 4 & 5. Memorize at least the principal parts of **beran**, **cuman**, **niman**, and **metan**.
- M Oct 6 MK ch. 14: strong verbs class 6 & 7. Memorize at least the principal parts of **faran**, **hatan**, and **gangan**. Web: try to learn the whole table of strong verbs. Next OE reading: ‘Extracts from the Old English Chronicle’ for the years 787-878 (MK pp. 253-55).
- W Oct 8 MK ch. 17 and 18: weak verbs class 1 (exercise). Memorize the conjugation of **fremman** and **dēman**.
- F Oct 10 Quiz 4. MK ch. 23: preterit-present verbs. Guide, §§206-211: modal auxiliaries.
- M Oct 13 MK ch. 20: weak verbs classes 2 & 3; memorize the conjugation of **lufian** and the list of important class 3 weak verbs. Next OE reading: ‘A Colloquy on the Occupations’ (Guide, text 3; read the first 5 occupations and the closing section, the ‘critique’).
- W Oct 15 Review.
- F Oct 17 **First midterm examination**.
- M Oct 20 Review of i-mutation. MK ch. 22: minor noun declensions. See also Guide, §§58-60. Next OE reading: Ælfric’s ‘Life of St. Edmund’ (Guide, text 4b).
- W Oct 22 Review conjugation of strong verbs. MK ch. 19: strong verbs with j-presents, numerals.
- F Oct 24 MK ch. 24 through §183: contract verbs.
- M Oct 27 Quiz 5. Guide, §§136-138: word formation and vocabulary building. Reread the suggestions about this on the website.
- W Oct 29 Guide, §§131-134 and 195-212: review of verbs, verbal syntax.
- F Oct 31 Guide, §§148-153: review oddities in sentence structure; §§182-186: parataxis.
- M Nov 3 Quiz 6. Next OE reading: ‘Bede’s account of Cædmon’ (Guide, text 9).
- W Nov 5 Review of OE grammar and prose syntax.
- F Nov 7 More reading and review.
- M Nov 10 **Second midterm examination**

- W Nov 12 “The Battle of Brunnanburh”(MK, pp. 277-9); brief introduction to OE poetry.
- F Nov 14 ‘Brunnanburh.’
- M Nov 17 ‘Riddles’ a, b, c, and d (from Guide, text 11).
- W Nov 19 “The Wanderer”(Guide, text 16).
- F Nov 21 NO CLASS: Thanksgiving recess.
- M Nov 24 “The Wanderer.”
- W Nov 26 “The Wanderer.”
- F Nov 28 “The Battle of Maldon”(Guide, text 12).
- M Dec 1 ‘Maldon.’
- W Dec 3 ‘Maldon.’
- F Dec 5 ‘Maldon.’
- M Dec 8 ‘Maldon.’
- W Dec 10 ‘Maldon.’
- F Dec 12 Review.

Final examination: Wed. Dec. 17, 2:45 – 4:45 pm, location to be announced.